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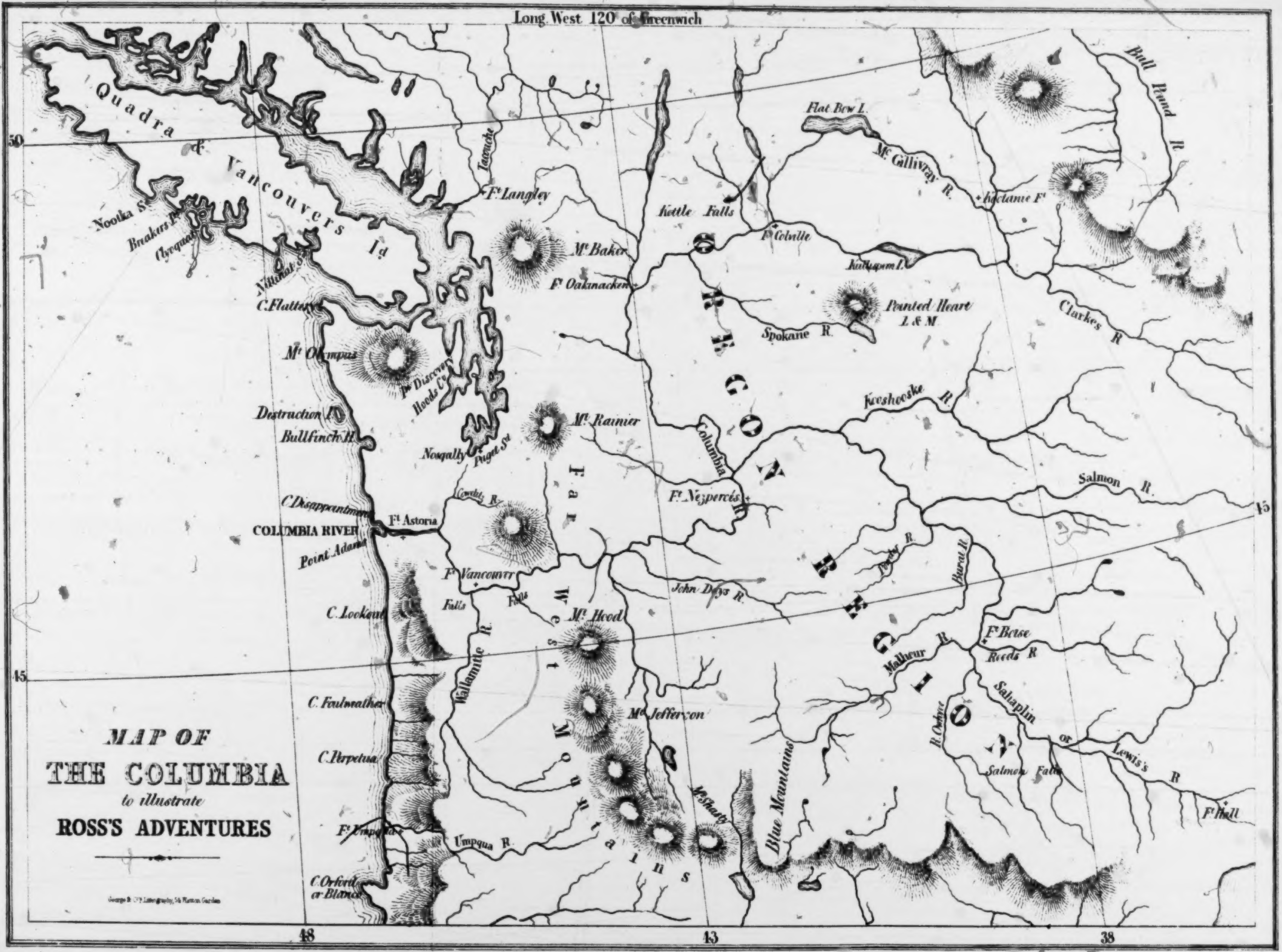
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C. Lookout
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C. Perpetua
Ft Umpqua
Umpqua R.
C. Orford or Blanco
Wallamitte R.
Tacouche
Ft Langley
Mt Baker
Ft Oakinacken
Mt Rainier
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Mt Jefferson
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REGION
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Malheur R.
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Sahaplin or Lewis's R
Salmon Falls
Ft Hall

MAP OF

THE COLUMBIA

to illustrate

ROSS'S ADVENTURES

George & Co's Lithography, 54 Hatton Garden

PUBLISHED BY SMITH, ELDER & Co LONDON.

# ADVENTURES

## OF THE FIRST SETTLERS ON THE

# OREGON OR COLUMBIA RIVER:

BEING

A NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION FITTED OUT BY
JOHN JACOB ASTOR,

TO ESTABLISH THE

"PACIFIC FUR COMPANY;"

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF SOME
INDIAN TRIBES ON THE COAST OF THE PACIFIC.

BY ALEXANDER ROSS,
ONE OF THE ADVENTURERS.

LONDON:
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# PREFACE.

Having been one of the first commercial adventurers to the Columbia River, and having spent fifteen years of my life travelling among the savage tribes west of the Rocky Mountains, I was induced, from time to time, to note down such incidents and opinions, illustrative of savage life and manners, as appeared to me either new or interesting.

To the characteristic details of Indian life, I have added that of personal adventure, the trials and misfortunes which the first adventurers had to undergo among the Indians in that quarter; connecting therewith an account of the trade and commerce of the country during the early days of that bold spirit which animated the first explorers of the Columbia.

These different subjects have been arranged and linked together in their natural order, so as to form one complete narrative, embodying the history of "the Pacific Fur Company."

It is not an arm-chair narrative, derived from hearsay tales, but the result of practical experience on the spot. From beginning to end, I had personally to act my part in the scenes described; they passed under my own eyes; and the account altogether may derive more value from being authentic than from any adventitious embellishment bestowed on it.

While on this part of our subject, it may be observed that there is an error which most travellers, especially those pioneers who first penetrate into dark and remote regions, fall into: they generally run into the extreme, and spoil a simple story by colouring. Not content to leave nature in its simple garb, they must brighten or darken, magnify or diminish, everything they describe, until at last the real likeness of the thing is entirely effaced, and truth itself, by over-refinement, is thrown into the shade.

What belongs to oneself is generally viewed with a partial eye; and perhaps that partiality influences my own opinion as to the interest of the subject before us. In reference to this subject, however, others have written on it as well as myself. Let our readers, therefore, judge for themselves.

In presenting the present work to the public, I have no very sanguine expectations. All I aim at is to lay before my readers a faithful and impartial statement of what took place, during my own times, in a quarter hitherto but little known.

Freedom from imperfection is not to be expected; yet, on the whole, I hope that this volume will prove to the calm inquirer, in all matters connected with the subject generally, a sure and satisfactory guide: allowance being made for any changes that may have taken place since this account was written—thirty years ago.

*Red River Settlement, Rupert's Land,*
*Aug.* 1, 1846.

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## ERRATA.

Page 4, line 6 from bottom, *omit* "to."
— 22, — 10 from bottom, *for* "Volverine" *read* "Wolverine."
— 103, lines 8 and 9, *for* "dollars each" *read* "pounds weight."

# ADVENTURES

OF THE

# FIRST SETTLERS ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER.

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## CHAPTER I.

Introductory remarks—John Jacob Astor—Grasping views—Early traders of Canada—The Hudson's Bay Company—American fur companies—Astor's policy—Russian settlements—Coasting vessels—The Pacific Fur Company—Flattering results—Oregon territory—New association—Mr. Hunt—Golden prospects—Proposals accepted—List of adventurers—Land party—Sea party—The ship *Tonquin*—Remarks—Opinion against opinion—Observations—Land expedition departs—Sea party set off for New York—Bark canoe—Spectators—Canadian voyageurs.

When I first conceived the idea of writing the following narrative, my design was to begin with a brief outline of the discoveries already made on the coast of the Pacific, from Drake in 1579 to Vancouver in 1792; or, rather, down to the present time; but, on second thoughts, I felt convinced that enough had been done already in that branch of inquiry; or, at least, that the further prosecution of it might be better left to those who aspire to literary fame. Mine is an humbler ambition—not to figure as an author, but to record faithfully, as a trader, the events in which I bore a part; and, in so doing, to gratify a desire kindled by an acquaintance with strange scenes and new fields of action, in a remote country which is still but little known.

The progress of discovery contributes not a little to the enlightenment of mankind; for mercantile interest stimulates curiosity and adventure, and combines with them to enlarge the circle of knowledge. To the spirit of enterprise developed in the service of commercial speculation, civilized nations owe not only wealth and territorial acquisitions, but also their acquaintance with the earth and its productions. The illustration of these remarks will be found in the following pages.

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Mr. Astor of New York, a German by birth, but a citizen of the United States, raised himself, by his adventurous and enterprising spirit, from small beginnings to be one of the wealthiest and most eminent merchants in America. Soon after his arrival in the United States, about the year 1784, he commenced his commercial career in the traffic of furs: at first on a very narrow scale, but gradually expanding as his means increased. In this way he made visits to Canada, purchasing furs in that country, and shipping them from thence to the London market:

and it is supposed that at this period his buoyant and aspiring mind conceived the vast project of grasping in his own hands, at some future day, the whole fur trade of North America.

The valuable furs and peltries scattered in former days over the extensive forests, lakes, and rivers of the Canadas, like the rich mines of Potosi and Mexico, invited many adventurers. The French, for some time after settling there, carried on an irregular but lucrative traffic in furs and peltries, with very little opposition, until the year 1670, when the Hudson's Bay Company, established by royal charter, took possession of the territory now called "Rupert's Land," or Hudson's Bay. The Canada, or as it was more generally called, the North-West Company, was formed in 1787; and these soon became the two great rival companies of the north, as we shall have occasion to notice more fully hereafter. Next on the theatre of action appeared the Mackina Company, which swept the warm regions of the south, as the two others did those of the wintry north, until the American Fur Company, established by Mr. Astor in 1809, commenced operations; but he, finding the Mackina fur traders somewhat in his way, bought out that Company, and added its territorial resources in 1811 to those of the American Fur Company. This body corporate was entitled the South-West, in contradistinction to the North-West Company.

Mr. Astor now saw himself at the head of all the fur trade of the south, and his intention was to penetrate through the barriers of the Northern Company, so as eventually to come into possession of all the fur trade east of the Rocky Mountains. With this plan still before him, he now turned his views to the trade on the coast of the Pacific, or that new field lying west of the Rocky Mountains, and which forms the subject of our present narrative. In this quarter the Russians alone had regular trading ports, opposite to Kamtschatka, where they still carry on a considerable trade in furs and seal skins, sending them across the Pacific direct to China. Their capital is limited, and their hunting grounds almost entirely confined to the sea-coast and islands around their establishments. The American coasting vessels also frequent this quarter, collecting vast quantities of valuable furs, which they convey to the Chinese market. This casual traffic by coasters, yielded to their owners in former days, by means of the returning cargo, an average clear gain of a thousand per cent. every second year; but these vessels are not so numerous of late, nor are the profits thus made so great as formerly.

The comprehensive mind of Mr. Astor could not but see these things in their true light, and to perceive that if such limited and desultory traffic produced such immense profits, what might not be expected from a well-regulated trade, supported by capital and prosecuted with system: at all events, the Russian trader would then be confined within his own limits, and the coasting vessels must soon disappear altogether.

Towards the accomplishment of the great plan which he had in view, Mr. Astor now set about opening a new branch of the fur trade on the Pacific, under the appellation of the "Pacific Fur Company," the grand central depôt of which was to be at the mouth of the Columbia River, the "Oregon of the Spaniards." By this means he contemplated carrying off the furs of all the countries west of the Rocky Mountains; at the same time forming a chain of trading posts across the Continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, along the waters of the great Missouri: connecting by this chain the operations of the South-West Company on the east, with that of the Pacific Fur Company on the west side of the dividing ridge.

This grand commercial scheme, appearing now plain and practicable, at least to men of sanguine disposition, gave much satisfaction to the American public, who, from the results contemplated, became deeply interested in its success; for all the rich cargoes of furs and peltries thus to be collected annually over the vast expanse were to be shipped in American vessels for the great China mart, there to be sold, and the proceeds invested in a return cargo of teas, silks, beads, and nankeens, and other articles of high demand in the United States; which would not only prevent to some extent the American specie from going out of the Union for such articles, but also turn the barren wilds of the north and far west into a source of national wealth. Some, however, of the more sagacious and influential among the Americans themselves observed to Mr. Astor at the time, that his plan would be likely to give umbrage to the British, and arouse them to assert more speedily their claims of prior discovery to the Oregon quarter, and that such a step would operate against him. To these suggestions Mr. Astor simply observed, "that he had thought of that, but intended chiefly to employ in his undertaking British subjects, and that he should on that account give less offence; besides," added he, "the claims of prior discovery and territorial right are claims to be settled by Government only, and not by an individual."

Mr. Astor's plans, hitherto known only to a few, now began to develope themselves more publicly. On the first intimation of the scheme, the North-Westerns took the alarm; for having already, in the prosecution of their trade, penetrated to the west side of the Rocky Mountains, in the direction of New Caledonia and the north branch of the Columbia, where they expected to reap a rich harvest, they viewed Astor's expedition to that quarter with a jealous eye, according to the old adage that "two of a trade seldom agree;" but others again extolled the brilliant project, as the brightest gem in the American Union, and particularly many of the retired partners of the North-West Company, who, not being provided for in some late arrangements, had left that concern in disgust, and therefore were the most likely to oppose with effect the ambitious views of their former coadjutors. These were just the men Mr. Astor had in his eye; men of influence and experience among savages, and who from their earlier days had been brought up in, and habituated to, the hardships of the Indian trade. To several of these persons Mr. Astor disclosed his plans and made proposals, whereupon Messrs. M'Kay, M'Kenzie, M'Dougall, and Stuart, entered into his views, and became partners in the new concern. The former of these gentlemen had accompanied Sir Alexander M'Kenzie in his voyages of discovery to the North Polar Sea in 1789, and to the Pacific in 1793, the narratives of which are before the public; and most of the others had equal experience, and were all of them in some way or other related to the great men at the head of the North-West Company.

Articles of association and co-partnership were therefore entered into and concluded at New York, in the spring of 1810, between those gentlemen and Mr. Astor, establishing the firm of the Pacific Fur Company, as already noticed; to which firm five other partners, namely, Messrs. Hunt, Crooks, Miller, M'Lellan, and Clarke, were soon afterwards added. The association was not a joint-stock concern; Mr. Astor alone furnished the capital, amounting to 200,000 dollars, divided into 100 shares of 2000 dollars each, with power to increase the capital to 500,000 dollars.

The association was formed for a period of twenty years, but with this proviso, that it was to be dissolved if it proved either unprofitable or impracticable, after a trial of five years; during which trial, however, Mr. Astor, as stock-holder, was alone to bear all expenses and losses, the other partners giving only their time and labour. Of the above shares, Mr. Astor held fifty in his own hands; Mr. Hunt, as his representative and chief manager of the business, five; while the other partners, who were to carry on the trade with the Indians, were to have four each, in the event of the business succeeding. The remaining shares were reserved for the clerks, who joined the concern as adventurers, without any other remuneration than their chance of success at the end of the five years' trial. The only exceptions were Mr. Robert Stuart and myself, who were to have our promotion at the end of the third year. From the proportion of interest, or number of shares in the hands of the stockholder and his representative, it will appear evident that the other partners, however unanimous they might be, could never have gained a majority of votes in any case over those which might have been by proxy appointed to represent Astor.

At the head depôt, or general rendezvous, was to be stationed Mr. Astor's representative. The person appointed to this important trust was Wilson Price Hunt, a gentleman from New Jersey, who alone, of the whole party, had never been engaged in the Indian trade; yet his active habits, perseverance, and enterprise, soon made good his want of experience, and enabled him to discharge the duties of his station. In him was also vested the chief authority, or, in his absence, in M'Dougall. It was therefore to either or to both of these gentlemen that all Mr. Astor's measures were made known, and all his cargoes consigned.

At the time when these novel schemes were first agitated, I was in Upper Canada; and the first intimation I had of them was in a letter from Mr. M'Kay, the senior partner, requesting an interview with me at Montreal. To Montreal I accordingly went in the month of May; and there, for the first time, I saw the gilded prospectus of the new Company, and, accepting the proposals made to me by Mr. Astor, was the first to join the expedition;—and who at the time would not have joined it, for, although the North-Westerns tried to throw all the cold water of the St. Lawrence on the project, yet they could not extinguish the flame it had spread abroad. The flattering hopes and golden prospects held out to adventurers, so influenced the public mind, that the wonder-stricken believers flocked in from all quarters to share in the wonderful riches of the far west.

It need not be wondered at, if, under the influence of such extravagant expectations, many applicants appeared; but in accordance with Astor's plan, that the business should be carried on only by persons of well-tested merit and experience, for on their habits of perseverance and enterprise alone rested all hopes of ultimate success, his assistants were selected with more than ordinary care, every poor fellow that engaged being led to believe that his fortune was already made. Here Messrs. Franchere, Pillet, M'Gillis, Farnham, and M'Lennan, besides Mr. Stuart and myself, joined the adventurers; besides five tradesmen or mechanics, and twenty-four canoe men, the best that could be found of their classes.

Operations were now deemed requisite for the accomplishment of the Company's views; therefore, while one party, headed by Mr. Hunt, was ordered to make its way across the Continent by land, another party, headed by Mr. M'Kay, was to proceed by sea in the *Tonquin*, a ship of 300 tons, and mounting twelve guns. The *Tonquin's* course was round Cape Horn, for the north-west coast. The Columbia River was to be the common destination of both parties. The land party at its outset consisted of only seventeen persons, but Mr. Hunt's object was to augment that number to about eighty as he passed along, by means of American trappers and hunters from the south. Here M'Kenzie strongly recommended Mr. Hunt to take all his men from Canada, as too much time might probably be lost in collecting them from the south; and besides, Canadians, as he thought, would answer much better; but Mr. Hunt adhered to his first plan.

The arrangement of these two expeditions, in which M'Kay, whose life had been spent in voyaging through the Indian countries, and who was nowise qualified as a merchant, had resigned the inland voyage to a gentleman, bred to mercantile pursuits, but unacquainted with this his new mode of travelling, exhibited such an egregious inversion of the ordinary rules of prudence, as gave rise to much comment.

Matters being so far settled, Mr. Hunt, who was now seconded by Mr. M'Kenzie, left La Chine, nine miles south of Montreal, with the land expedition, in the beginning of July; and, on the 20th of the same month, the ship party, consisting of three partners, five clerks, Mr. Stuart, and myself, five mechanics, and fourteen canoe men, left Montreal for New York, where we were to embark. Of this number, however, M'Kay and eight of the most expert voyageurs proceeded in a bark-canoe through the States: on all such occasions there is a kind of mutual understanding between both parties, that is, between the canoe men and the canoe, the former undertaking to carry the latter over the land part of the journey, while the latter is bound to carry the others safe over water. The appearance of this unusual kind of craft on the American waters, with the cheerful chantings of its crew, their feathered caps and sylvan appearance, as they approached the gay city of New York, attracted such a crowd of spectators of all classes around them, as left but little space to land; but what was the astonishment, when, in the twinkling of an eye, two of the crew were seen to shoulder their craft, capable of containing two tons weight, and to convey it to a place of safety on terra firma. Mr. Astor, who happened to be present, was so delighted with the vivacity and dexterity of the two men, that he gave them an eagle to drink his health; then turning round, observed to some gentlemen who were standing by, that "six Americans could not do what these two brawny fellows had done," which observation gave rise to some further remarks, when Mr. M'Kay, with an air of confidence, challenged the swiftest New York boat for a three mile race, offering to bet ten to one on his canoe men, but, after what had been witnessed, no one appeared disposed to risk his money. It is scarcely necessary in this place to observe, that the Canadian voyageurs are among the most expert and venturesome canoe men in the world.

# CHAPTER II.

The *Tonquin* sails—Quarrels on board—The captain's character—Accommodations—A sudden squall—Flying fish—The captain's harshness—Cape de Verd Islands—Alarm of fire—A suspicious sail—Crossing the Line—Springing a leak—Short allowance of water—Immense wave—The Falkland Islands—Rocky passage—Wild fowl—Port Egmont Bay—The party on shore—Mr. Farnham's gray goose—Old graves renewed—Epitaphs—Party left behind—New dangers—Mr. Robert Stuart's determined conduct—Feuds on board—Cape Horn doubled—The weather—Pilot fish—Trade winds—Rogues' mess—Little pilot—Mouna Roa—A man overboard—The mate in irons.

On the 6th of September 1810, all hands—twenty-two belonging to the ship, and thirty-three passengers—being on board, the *Tonquin* set sail, and a fresh breeze springing up, soon wafted her to a distance from the busy shores of New York. We had not proceeded far when we were joined by the American frigate *Constitution*, which was to escort us clear of the coast. On the 7th, in the afternoon, we passed Sandy Hook lighthouse, and the next day the *Constitution* returned, we dismissed our pilot, and were soon out of sight of land, steering a S.E. course.

So far all was bustle and confusion upon deck, and every place in the ship was in such a topsy-turvy state, with what sailors call live and dead lumber, that scarcely any one knew how or where he was to be stowed; and it was in settling this knotty point that the crusty supremacy of the high-minded captain was first touched. Captain Jonathan Thorn had been brought up in the American navy, had signalized himself, and upon the present occasion he stood upon his own quarter-deck. Matters went on well enough till we came to the mechanics: these young men had been selected from the most respectable of their class, had been promised by their employers situations as clerks in the trade whenever vacancies should occur, and in consequence, serving in the twofold capacity of clerks and tradesmen, they were entitled, by their engagements, whilst on board ship to the same treatment as the other clerks; but behold when the captain came to assign them their place, it was not in either the second or the third cabin, no, nor in the steerage, but before the mast among the common sailors. In vain did they remonstrate, and equally vain was it for them to produce copies of their engagements; right or wrong, forward they must go; but that was not all; to the grievance of bad accommodations was added that of an insult to their feelings, by being compelled, as a further punishment for their obstinacy, to perform the duties of common seamen both by day and night. After this bit of a row with the captain, they applied for redress to the partners on board, the very persons with whom they had executed their agreements. The partners interposed, and in their turn remonstrated with the captain, but without effect; he remained inexorable. Both parties then getting into a violent passion, Mr. M'Kay said, "That his people would defend themselves rather than suffer such treatment." On hearing this, the captain, suddenly turning round on his heel, defied Mr. M'Kay and his people, adding, "that he would blow out the brains of the first man who dared to disobey his orders on board his own ship." In the midst of this scene, Mr. David Stuart, a good old soul, stept up, and by his gentle and timely interference put an end to the threatening altercation.

This was the first specimen we had of the captain's disposition, and it laid the foundation of a rankling hatred between the partners and himself, which ended only with the voyage, and not only that, but it soon spread like a contagion amongst all classes, so that party spirit ran high: the captain and his people viewing the passengers as the passengers did them, with no very cordial feelings. Whilst these feuds agitated the great folks at the head of affairs, we amused ourselves with conjectures as to the issue of the contest. A new leaf was to be turned over, the captain forbade the partners the starboard side of the quarter-deck; the clerks, the quarter-deck altogether; and as for the poor mechanics and Canadians, they were ruled ever after with a rod of iron. All this time the *Tonquin* was speeding her way proudly over the wide bosom of the Atlantic, until the 18th, in the morning, when she was struck with a sudden squall, which backed all the sails and placed her in a critical position for about two minutes; her stern going down foremost was almost under water, when all at once she recovered and relieved our anxiety. The next day two sail were descried a head, all hands were mustered on deck, and each had his station assigned to him in case of coming to close quarters. For some days past the flying fish appeared in immense numbers, passing frequently through the ship's rigging, and now and then falling on the deck. We measured one of them and found its length to be 5½ inches, circumference of the body 2 inches; the wings, situate near the gills, resemble in texture the wings of the bat, and measure, when stretched, 5 inches between the tips. In their flight they generally rise to 15 or 20 feet above the surface of the water, and fly about 150 yards at a time. As soon as their wings get dry they fall again into the water, and only fly to avoid their pursuers. They are the prey of the dolphin and other large fishes.

On the 6th of October we made one of the Cape de Verd Islands, on the coast of Africa. It proved to be Bonavista, in lat. 16° N. and long. 22° 47′ W. The land, covered with a blue haze, appeared broken, barren, and rocky. The weather was overcast, and we had heavy rain and thunder at the time. Near this place immense shoals of porpoises kept skipping on the surface of the water going southwards. They were said to prognosticate the near approach of bad weather. We found the changes of the weather here very remarkable, from calm to rough, from foul to fair; clear, cloudy, wet, dry, hazy, and squally alternately, with the usual finale of mist and rain, and not unfrequently all these changes within the twenty-four hours.

After leaving the land, some of the gentlemen amused themselves one fine evening with shooting at a mark suspended from the ship's stern, under which a boat lay secured; soon afterwards, in the dusk of the evening, smoke was seen to issue from that quarter; the alarm of fire was given, and in an instant all the people assembled on deck in a state of wild confusion, some calling out to broach the water-casks, others running to and fro in search of water, some with mugs, others with decanters, while the *mâitre de cuisine* was robbed of his broth and dish water—no one, in the hurry and bustle of the moment, ever thought of dipping the buckets alongside. At length, to the inexpressible joy of all, it was discovered that the smoke was occasioned only by the wadding of the guns setting fire to some old junk which was lying in the boat astern. This gentle warning, however, put an end to such sport in future. Some angry words took place between the captain and Mr. Fox, the first mate, on which the latter was suspended from duty, and ordered below: no other reason could be assigned for this act but the friendly and sociable terms existing between the mate and the partners; for by this time such was the ill-feeling between the captain and the passengers generally, that scarcely a word passed between them. After three days' confinement Mr. Fox was reinstated.

Just as we entered the trade winds, a sail appeared about two leagues to leeward; she gained fast upon us, and dogged us all day, and the next morning was close under our stern. She appeared to be an armed brig, and pierced for twenty guns, and looked very suspicious; very few hands, however, were to be seen on her deck, which might have been a manœuvre to decoy us alongside. We were prepared for combat, at least as far as a good display of numbers on deck: for to our numbers, and not to either our skill or discipline, did we chiefly trust, and it is probable this show had the desired effect, for she soon bore away and we saw her no more.

On the 25th, in long. 26° 24′ W. we crossed the equinoctial line, and here the usual ceremony of ducking was performed on such of the sailors as had never before entered the southern hemisphere. The heat was intense, the weather a dead calm, and the ocean smooth as a sheet of glass. The thermometer stood at 92° in the shade.

In lat. 3° 17′ S. and long. 26° 40′ W. we spoke a brig from Liverpool bound to Pernambuco. On nearing this old and ghastly-looking hulk, which apparently had but few hands on board, we thought ourselves exceedingly strong compared to her, and I suppose from the bold front we presented, put her in as much bodily fear as the armed brig some days before did us.

On the 10th of November a violent gale came on, which lasted for fifty hours without intermission, and did us considerable damage, our jib and jib-boom being both carried off, and a leak of considerable extent sprung; but as it was easy of access, we soon got it stopped again. In the night of the 14th, an alarm of fire was again given; but after much confusion it ended without serious consequences. Of all calamities that of fire on board ship seems to be the most terrific, and every precaution was taken to prevent any accident of the kind, for at nine o'clock every night all the lights were, by the captain's orders, put out, and this rule was strictly observed during the voyage. In these latitudes we saw many turtle, and caught some of them sleeping on the water, one of which weighed forty-five pounds; we also frequently met with what the sailors call a Portuguese man-of-war, or sea-bladder, floating on the surface of the waters.

In lat. 35° S. and 42° 17′ W. we experienced another tempestuous gale, which lasted upwards of forty hours. During this violent storm the ship laboured hard, and sustained damage. Two new leaks were observed, and many of the sails blown to rags. Although the top and top-gallant masts had been lowered, six of the guns got dismounted, and kept for some time rolling like thunder on the deck, and the ship in a constant heavy sea. For seventeen hours she scudded before the wind, and went in that time two hundred and twenty miles; nothing alarming, however, took place until eight o'clock in the morning of the second day, when a very heavy sea broke over the stern, and filled us all with consternation. This wave, like a rolling mountain, passed over her deck ten feet high, and broke with a tremendous crash about the mainmast; yet, fortunately, no lives were lost, for on its near approach we all clung to the rigging, and by that means saved ourselves. On the weather moderating the carpenter was soon at work, and succeeded effectually in stopping the leaks. On the 20th our allowance of water, already short by one-half, was lessened to a pint and a half per man, and on the 2nd of December to a pint each man per day—then a gallon of brandy was offered for a pint of fresh water! but on the 5th, when the joyful sight of land was announced, a hogshead of water was offered in return for a pint of brandy. In the afternoon of this day, we made the N. W. point of one of the Falkland Islands, the rugged and solitary features of which presented a truly romantic appearance. Near this spot are three remarkable peaked rocks, or insular bluffs, of considerable height, and nearly equal distance from each other. We soon afterwards came close in with the shore, and beheld a rocky surface, with an aspect of hopeless sterility.

Here we came to an anchor; but the captain not liking the place changed his resolution of taking in water there.

During the few hours, however, which we spent on shore, while the ship lay at anchor, one of the sailors, named Johnston, strolled out of the way. The captain, nevertheless, gave orders to weigh anchor, declaring that he would leave the fellow to his fate; but after much entreaty he consented to wait an hour, adding, that if the man did not return in that time he should never more set foot on board his ship. A party immediately volunteered to go in search of the lost tar. This party after beating about in vain for some time, at last thought of setting fire to the few tufts of grass which here and there alone decked the surface. This expedient succeeded, and the man was found, having fallen asleep near the water's edge. But the hour had unfortunately elapsed, and the loss of a few minutes more so enraged the captain, that he not only threatened the man's life, but maltreated all those who had been instrumental in finding him. We then set sail, and had much difficulty in effecting a passage through a narrow strait which lay before us, interrupted in many places by ledges of rocks, which were literally covered with seals, penguins, white and grey geese, ducks, shags, albatrosses, eagles, hawks, and vultures. After making our way through this intricate pass, we again came to anchor.

On the 7th of December we anchored in Port Egmont Bay, for the purpose of taking in a supply of water. The bay or inlet of Port Egmont is about a mile long, and half a mile broad, and sheltered from almost every wind that blows. All hands now were set to work; two of the mates and two-thirds of the crew, together with the mechanics and Canadians, commenced replenishing the water-casks, whilst the other two mates with the remainder of the people were employed on board repairing the rigging, and putting everything in a fit condition for a new start. During these operations the partners and clerks, and frequently the captain also, went sporting on shore, where wild fowl of all kinds stunned our ears with their noises, and darkened the air with their numbers, and were generally so very tame, or rather stupid, that we often killed them with sticks and stones, and the sailors in their boats often knocked down the ducks and penguins with their oars in passing the rocks. The only quadruped we saw on land was a volverine of ordinary size, which one of our party shot.

Our tent was pitched on shore, not above four hundred yards from the ship; this was our sporting rendezvous. On the 10th all the water-casks were ready, and the captain on going on board that evening said to Mr. M'Dougall, that the ship would probably sail the next day. Soon after, however, Messrs. M'Kay and M'Dougall also went on board, where they passed the night; but coming ashore the next morning, they told us that the ship would not sail till the 12th, and that all hands were ordered on board on that night.

In the mean time Mr. Farnham, one of the clerks had caught a grey goose, which he tied to a stone between our hut and the landing-place, in order to have some sport with it. Soon afterwards the captain, happening to come on shore, and seeing the goose, he up with his gun to shoot at it. Thinking, however, that he had missed it, he instantly reloaded and fired again, and seeing the goose flutter he ran up to catch it, when he discovered his mistake, on which we all burst out a laughing. Nettled at this, he immediately turned round and went on board again. Meantime, Messrs. M'Dougall and Stuart started across the point after game; whilst Mr. M'Kay, myself, and some others, went up the bay a little to repair two old graves which we had discovered in a dilapidated state the day before. On one of these graves was the following rudely-cut inscription on a board:—"William Stevens, aged twenty-two years, killed by a fall from a rock, on the 21st of September 1794;" on the other, "Benjamin Peak died of the smallpox on the 5th of January 1803, ship *Eleonora*, Captain Edmund Cole, Providence, Rhode Island."

While we were thus eagerly employed, little did we suspect what was going on in another quarter; for, about two o'clock in the afternoon, one of our party called out, "The ship 's off!"—when all of us, running to the top of a little eminence, beheld, to our infinite surprise and dismay, the *Tonquin*, under full sail, steering out of the bay. We knew too well the callous and headstrong passions of the wayward captain to hesitate a moment in determining what to do; with hearts, therefore, beating between anxious hope and despair, some made for the boat, whilst others kept running and firing over hill and dale to warn Messrs. M'Dougal and Stuart, who had not yet returned. In half an hour we were all at the water's edge; the ship by this time was three miles out at sea. We were now nine persons on shore, and we had to stow, squat, and squeeze ourselves into a trumpery little boat, scarcely capable of holding half our number. In this dreadful dilemma, we launched on a rough and tempestuous sea, and, against wind and tide, followed the ship. The wind blowing still fresher and fresher, every succeeding wave threatened our immediate destruction. Our boat already half full of water, and ourselves, as may be supposed, drenched with the surges passing over her, we gave up all hope of succeeding in the unequal struggle, and a momentary pause ensued, when we deliberated whether we should proceed in the perilous attempt or return to land. The ship was now at least two leagues ahead of us, and just at this time the man who was bailing out the water in the boat unfortunately let go and lost the pail, and one of our oars being broken in the struggle to recover it, our destiny seemed sealed beyond a doubt. A second deliberation ended in the resolve to reach the ship or perish in the attempt. The weather now grew more violent; the wind increased; and, what was worst of all, the sun had just sunk under the horizon, and the fearful night began to spread its darkness over the turbulent deep. Every ray of hope now vanished: but so short-sighted is man, that the moment when he least expects it, relief often comes from an unseen hand; and such was our case; for in an instant our hopeless anxiety was turned into joy by the ship suddenly making down to our assistance: but here again we had a new danger to contend with; for, on coming alongside, we were several times like to be engulfed or dashed to pieces by the heavy seas and rolling of the ship. The night was dark; the weather stormy; and death in a thousand forms stared us in the face. At length, after many ineffectual attempts and much manœuvring, we succeeded in getting on board; having been in the boat upwards of six hours. That the captain's determination was to leave us all to our fate, there is not the least doubt; for he declared so afterwards, in a letter written to Mr. Astor from the Sandwich Islands, and he was only prevented from carrying his purposes into effect by the determined conduct of Mr. Robert Stuart, who, seizing a brace of pistols, peremptorily told the captain to order about ship and save the boat; or, he added, "You are a dead man this instant."

During the night the gale increased almost to a hurricane, so that two of our sails were torn to pieces, and the side-rails broke by the labouring of the ship; so we had to lie-to under a storm-staysail for six hours. The reader is here left to picture to himself how matters went on after the scene just described. All the former feuds and squabbles between the captain and passengers sink into insignificance compared to the recent one. Sullen and silent, both parties passed and repassed each other in their promenades on deck without uttering a word; but their looks bespoke the hatred that burnt within. The partners on the quarter-deck made it now a point to speak nothing but the Scotch dialect; while the Canadians on the forecastle spoke French—neither of which did the captain understand; and as both groups frequently passed hours together, cracking their jokes and chanting their outlandish songs, the commander seemed much annoyed on these occasions, pacing the deck in great agitation. Yet all this time the good ship was hastening on her way.

On the 15th we saw Staten Land, whose forked peaks and rugged surface exhibited much snow. Soon afterwards, Terra del Fuego came in sight; and on the 19th, at 9 o'clock in the morning, we had a full view of Cape Horn. But adverse winds meeting us here, we were unable to double it before Christmas morning, and were carried, in the mean time, as far south as lat. 58° 16′. While in these latitudes, notwithstanding the foggy state of the weather, we could read common print at all hours of the night on deck without the aid of artificial light. The sky was generally overcast, and the weather raw and cold, with frequent showers of hail and snow, but we saw no ice. Here the snow birds and Cape pigeon frequently flew in great numbers about the ship. After doubling the Cape, a speckled red and white fish, about the size of a salmon, was observed before the ship's bow, as if leading the way. The sailors gave it the name of the pilot-fish.

With gladdened hearts, we now bent our course northward on the wide Pacific. On the 19th of January 1811, all hands passed the ordeal of inspection, or as the sailors more appropriately called it, the "general turn-out;" and as none could guess what this new manœuvre portended, we all judged it to be a relic of man-of-war discipline, which the captain introduced merely to refresh his memory; but the proceeding must be described:—After breakfast, all hands were summoned on deck, and there ordered to remain, while the officers of the ship got up the trunks, chests, hammocks, dirty shirts, and old shoes belonging to each individual, on deck. They were then ordered to empty out the contents of the boxes, examine, and expose the whole to view, each man's paraphernalia separately. While this was going on, the bystanders were ordered to claim any article belonging to them in the possession of another. This declaration cleared up the matter, and set our judgment right as to the captain's motives; but, to the credit of all, very little stolen property was found—being only three articles, namely, a pamphlet, a clasp-knife, and a spoon, and even as to them the theft was not very well proved; but the three individuals implicated were nevertheless condemned, and placed on what is called the "rogue's mess" for a month.

On the 24th we again crossed the Equator, and entered the northern hemisphere, and here the pilot-fish that joined us at Cape Horn disappeared. During a run of upwards of 5,000 miles, our little piscatory pilot was never once known, by day or night, to intermit preceding the ship's bow. On the 10th of February, the cloud-capped summit of the towering Mouna Roa—a pyramidal mountain in Owhyhee, and the loftiest in the Sandwich Islands—was visible at the distance of 50 miles.

As we drew near to the land, going at the rate of eight knots an hour, a Canadian lad named Joseph LaPierre fell overboard. This was an awkward accident, as all eyes were at the time gazing with admiration on the scenery of the land. In an instant, however, the sails were backed, boats lowered, and everything at hand thrown overboard to save the drowning man; but before he could be picked up the ship had distanced him more than a mile, and when the boatswain reached the ship with the body, the captain, in his usual sympathizing mood, peremptorily ordered him about to pick up all the trumpery which had been thrown into the water. This took a considerable time. The apparently lifeless body was then hoisted on board, and every means tried to restore animation, and at last, by rolling the body in warm blankets, and rubbing it with salt, the lad recovered, after being thirty-eight minutes in the water, and though unable to swim.

Mr. Fox, who had again fallen under the captain's displeasure, and who had been, in consequence, off duty for a week past, was reinstated this morning. This was no sooner done, however, than the fourth mate, the captain's own brother, was put into irons. The young Thorn was as factious and morose a subject as his brother; with this only difference, that he had less power to do mischief. He had maltreated one of the passengers; and the captain, in order to show impartiality, awarded him the above punishment.

## CHAPTER III.

**Karakakoos Bay—The sailors desert—The captain's conduct—Productions of Owhyhee—Tocaigh Bay—Governor Young—Royal proclamation—Woahoo—Ourourah, the residence of Tammeatameah—Harbour fees—Excursion on shore—The Queen's umbrella—The King's appearance—Royal palace and guards—Arsenal, or royal workshop—Royal dinner—His Majesty's fleet—Morais, or places of public worship—Sacred or puranee ground tabooed—Storm—A sailor left to his fate among the natives—Parting visit from his Majesty—His meanness—Diving of the natives—Native proas: how made—Clothing—Customs and peculiarities—Character of the women—White men at the Sandwich Islands—The King's disposition towards foreigners—Captain Cook—Pahooas, or war spears—A sham fight—Religion—Tammeatameah conqueror and king—Apparent happiness of the natives—Prophetic hint—Distressed situation of a boat.**

On the 13th of February the ship anchored in Karakakooa Bay, in the island of Owhyhee, and within a mile of the place where the unfortunate Captain Cook fell in 1779. The Sandwich Islands are eleven in number, and lie between the 19th and 22nd parallels of N. latitude, and the meridians of 151° and 160° W. longitude. The climate is warm but healthy, and more temperate and uniform than is usual in tropical countries; nor is it subject to hurricanes and earthquakes. In their customs and manners the natives resemble the New Zealanders, and like them are a warlike people: all classes tattoo their bodies.

Karakakooa Bay is about a mile or more in extent, but sheltered only on one side, which presents a high rugged front of coral rock, resembling a rampart or battery in the bottom of the bay, facing the ocean, with two bushy trees on it waving in the wind like flags. The shores, with the exception of the above-mentioned rock, are everywhere low, with here and there clumps of cocoa-nut and other trees, which give a pleasing variety to the scene; and the land, rising gradually as it recedes to a considerable height, looks down over intervening hill and dale upon the delightful little villages of Kakooa and Kowrowa.

We were now near land, and the captain's conduct to both passengers and crew had fostered a spirit of desertion among the sailors: Jack Tar, slipping off in the night, was seen no more. This new feature in our affairs portended no good, but brought about a sweeping change, for the captain had now no resource but to place his chief confidence in those whom he had all along maltreated and affected to despise. In this state of things, the natives were employed to bring back the deserters. One Roberts, a yankee, was confined below; Ems, a Welshman, was tied up and flogged; Johnston, an Englishman, was put in irons; and Anderson, the boatswain, could not be found. Storming and stamping on deck, the captain called up all hands; he swore, he threatened, and abused the whole ship's company, making, if possible, things worse. I really pitied the poor man, although he had brought all this trouble upon himself: with all his faults he had some good qualities, and in his present trying situation we all forgot our wrongs, and cheerfully exerted ourselves to help him out of his difficulties. The clerks were appointed to assist the officers, and the Canadians to supply the place of the sailors in keeping watch and doing the other duties on shore; while the partners, forgetting former animosities, joined hand in hand with the captain in providing for the wants of the ship.

Order being now restored, the partners and some of the clerks went occasionally on shore; meantime, the natives having paid several visits on board, and sounded our bargain-making chiefs (for they are shrewd dealers), a brisk trade commenced in plantains, bananas, yams, taro, bread-fruit, sweet potatoes, sugar-canes, cocoa-nuts, and some pork, the principal productions of the place. We had not been long here, however, till we learned that the chief of the island resided at a place called Tocaigh Bay, some distance off; and, as we expected a further and better supply there, we sailed for that place, where we had an interview with the governor, a white man, named John Young. He received us kindly, and with every mark of attention peculiar to an Indian chief; showed us his wife, his daughter, his household, and vassals—a strange assemblage of wealth and poverty, filth and plenty.

Governor Young was a native of England, and belonged to an American ship, the *Eleanor*, of which he was boatswain. That vessel, happening to touch at the Sandwich Islands in 1790, left Young there to shift for himself; but his nautical skill and good conduct soon recommended him to the reigning prince, Tammeatameah, and he is now Viceroy or Governor of Owhyhee. He is about 60 years of age, shrewd, and healthy; but, from his long residence among the natives, he has imbibed so much of their habits and peculiarities, that he is now more Indian than white man.

We had not been long at the village of Tocaigh, when Governor Young gave us to understand that no rain had fallen in that neighbourhood during the four preceding years, and that in consequence provisions were very scarce, and good water was not to be found there at any time. These details were discouraging. The natives, however, began a brisk trade in fruits and vegetables; we, however, were desirous of purchasing hogs and goats, but were told that the sale of pork had been prohibited by royal proclamation, and that, without the permission of the king, who resided in the island of Woahoo, no subject could dispose of any. Anxious to complete our supplies, we immediately resolved on sailing to Woahoo.

On the 21st of February, we cast anchor abreast of Ourourah, the metropolis of Woahoo, and royal residence of Tammeatameah. This is the richest and most delightful spot in the whole archipelago. On our approaching the land, two white officers came on board; the one a Spaniard, secretary to his majesty; the other a Welshman, the harbour master: the latter brought us safe to anchor in Whyteete Bay, for which service he demanded and was paid five Spanish dollars.

The royal village of Ourourah is situate at the foot of a hill, facing the ocean, on the west side of the island. The houses were 740 in number, and contained 2025 inhabitants. It will appear strange that so few inhabitants should require so many houses, but this will be explained hereafter. Behind the village there is an extensive field under fine cultivation—perhaps it may measure 500 acres; but its appearance was greatly injured by irregular enclosures, or rather division lines, formed of loose stones running on the surface, intersecting and crossing each other in every possible direction, for the purpose of marking the plot claimed by each individual or family: the whole is cultivated with much skill and industry, the soil teemingly rich, and the labour abundant, with here and there small water-courses and aqueducts.

Immediately after coming to anchor, Captain Thorn, accompanied by Mr. M'Kay and Mr. M'Dougall, waited on his majesty, Tammeatameah, and after dining with him, returned on board. In the afternoon his majesty and three queens returned the visit in state, the royal canoe being paddled by sixteen chiefs, with the state arm-chest on board. Their majesties were received with becoming ceremony. The flag was displayed, and three guns fired. The king was conducted to the cabin, followed by his valet, who held a spitting-box in his hand, but the queens preferred remaining on deck. While here, they very unceremoniously disrobed themselves, plunged overboard, and after swimming and sporting for some time in the water, came on board again and dressed themselves, after which they joined Tammeatameah in the cabin, where they did ample justice to a good collation, drank two bottles of wine, and left us apparently well pleased with their reception. The chiefs remained all the time in the royal yacht alongside.

Tammeatameah appeared to be about fifty years of age; straight and portly, but not corpulent; his countenance was pleasing, but his complexion rather dark, even for an Indian. He had on a common beaver hat, a shirt, and neckcloth, which had once been white; a long blue coat with velvet collar, a cassimere vest, corduroy trousers, and a pair of strong military shoes; he also wore a long and not inelegant sword, which he said he got from his brother, the king of England.

During these interviews and visits of ceremony, the captain had broached the subject of pork to his majesty; but this was not the work of an hour nor of a day; pork was a royal monopoly, and the king well knew how to turn it to his advantage on the present occasion, for several conferences were held, and all the *pros* and *cons* of a hard bargain discussed, before the royal contract was concluded. Time, however, brought it about, and the negociation was finally closed; the king furnished the requisite supplies of hogs, goats, poultry, and vegetables, for all of which a stipulated quantity of merchandize was to be given in return. Business now commenced, and good water and provisions were brought to the ship in boat-loads; and as the king further pledged himself, that if any of the sailors deserted he would answer for their safe delivery again, this assurance, although the words of kings are not always sacred, had the effect of relieving the passengers from the ship's duties; we were, therefore, enabled to go on shore.

On walking up to the royal city on our first landing, we were met by two of the queens, accompanied by a page of honour. They were all three walking abreast, the page in the middle, and holding with his two hands a splendid parasol of the richest silk, measuring six feet eight inches in diameter. From this umbrella hung twelve massy tassels, weighing at least a pound each. The ladies were very communicative, and after detaining us for nearly half an hour passed on. We were soon afterwards introduced to his majesty, who honoured us with a glass of arrack. Here we had a full view of the royal palace, the royal family, and the life-guards. The palace consisted of thirteen houses, built so as to form a square. All the buildings of the country are a kind of wicker work, remarkable for their neatness and regularity; and although slender, they appear to be strong and durable; nor did there appear any difference between the royal buildings and the other houses of the place, the square and court-yard excepted. The king occupied three of these houses; one for eating, another for sleeping, and the third for business, which may be called the audience chamber. Each of the queens occupied three also; a dressing house, a sleeping house, and an eating house. His majesty never enters any of the queens' houses, nor do they ever enter any of his: in this respect, they are always tabooed. There is a house set apart exclusively for their interviews. The established custom of the land is, that each family, however poor, invariably occupies three houses; and this will explain why so many houses are required for so few inhabitants.

We also saw two of the king's sons; one of them was in disgrace and tabooed; that is, interdicted from speaking with anybody. We were next shown the life-guards, consisting of forty men, accoutred in something of the English style, with muskets, belts, and bayonets; but their uniform was rather old and shabby. The parade-ground, or place where the guards were on duty, lay just behind the royal buildings, on a level square green spot made up for the purpose, and on which were placed eighteen four or six pounders, all mounted, and apparently in good order.

From this we proceeded to a long narrow range of buildings, where a number of artisans were at work, making ship, sloop, and boat tackling, ropes, blocks, and all the other *et ceteras* required for his majesty's fleet; while others again, in a wing of the same building, were employed in finishing single and double canoes; the former for pleasure, the latter for commercial purposes. At the far end of the buildings was erected a blacksmith's forge; and beyond that, in a side room, lay the masts, spars, and rigging of a new schooner. The tools used by the different workmen were very simple, slender, few, and ill-made, and yet the work done by them surprised us.

While in the workshops, Mr. M'Kay took a fancy to a small knot of wood, about the size of a pint-pot, and asked it of the king. His majesty took the bit of wood in his hand, and after looking at it for some time, turned round to Mr. M'Kay and said, "This is a very valuable piece of wood; it is the finest koeye, and what my Erees make their pipes of; but if you will give me a new hat for it, you can have it." Mr. M'Kay smiled, adding, "Your majesty shall have it." So the bargain was struck; but Mr. M'Kay fell in love with no more of his majesty's wood. They make their own cloth, cordage, salt, sugar, and whisky.

The king then invited us to dine; and entering a small wretched hovel adjoining the workshop, we all sat down round a dirty little table, on which was spread some viands, yams, taro, cocoa-nuts, pork, bread-fruit, and arrack. The king grew very jovial, ate and drank freely, and pressed us to follow his example. After dinner, he apologized for the meanness of the place, by saying that his banqueting house was tabooed that day. Dinner being over, he brought us to see a large stone building, the only one of the kind on the island, situate at some distance from the other buildings; but he showed no disposition to open the door and let us have a peep at the inside. He said it cost him 2,000 dollars. We were told the royal treasure and other valuables were kept there. Behind the stone building, and near the shore, was lying at anchor an old ship of about 300 tons, with some guns and men on deck—said to be the guard-ship. From this position, we saw sixteen vessels of different sizes, from 10 to 200 tons, all lying in a wretched and ruinous condition along the beach; some on shore, others afloat, but all apparently useless. The day being excessively warm, and our curiosity gratified, we took leave of his majesty, and staid for the night at the house of a Mr. Brown, an American settler, who had resided on the island for several years.

After passing an agreeable night, we bade adieu to our hospitable landlord, and set out to view the morais, or places of public worship. Of these, Ourourah alone contains fifteen of this description. Each morai is composed of several miserable-looking little huts, or houses. Passing by all the inferior ones, we at length reached the king's morai, or principal one of the place. It consisted of five low, gloomy, and pestiferous houses, huddled close together; and alongside of the principal one stood an image made of wood, resembling a pillar, about 28 feet high, in the shape of the human figure, cut and carved with various devices; the head large, and the rude sculpture on it presenting the likeness of a human face, carved on the top with a black cowl. About thirty yards from the houses, all round about, was a clear spot called the "king's tabooed ground," surrounded by an enclosure. This sacred spot is often rigorously tabooed and set apart for penance. It was while walking to and fro on this solitary place that we saw Tatooirah, the king's eldest son, who was in disgrace. We were prevented from entering within the enclosure. At the foot of this pagod, or pillar, were scattered on the ground several dead animals: we saw four dogs, two hogs, five cats, and large quantities of vegetables, almost all in a state of putrefaction; the whole emitting a most offensive smell. On the death of the king or other great eree, and in times of war, human sacrifices are frequently offered at the shrine of this moloch. The word *taboo* implies interdiction or prohibition from touching the place, person, or thing tabooed; a violation of which is always severely punished, and at the king's morai, with death.

We had scarcely got on board, late in the evening, when a tremendous gale from the land arose and drove the ship out to sea. The fury of the tempest and darkness of the night obliged us to cut cable, and two days were spent in anxious forebodings, ere we got back again into harbour.

On the 27th, all our supplies, according to contract, were safe on board; and from the good conduct of the sailors since our arrival, we began to think matters would go on smoothly for the future; but these hopes were of short duration—the hasty and choleric disposition of the captain destroyed our anticipations. Two of the boats had gone on shore as usual; but on the call for all hands to embark, three of the sailors were missing. The boats, without waiting a moment, pushed off, but had reached the ship only fifteen minutes before two of the three men arrived in an Indian canoe. Notwithstanding the anxiety they manifested, and their assurance that the boat had not been off five minutes before they were on the beach, they were both tied up, flogged, and then put in irons. But this was not all; Emms, the third man, not being able to procure a canoe, had unfortunately to pass the night on shore, but arrived the next morning by sunrise. On arriving alongside, the captain, who was pacing the deck at the time, did not wait till he got on board, but jumping into a boat which lay alongside, laid hold of some sugar-canes with which the boat was loaded, and bundled the poor fellow, sprawling and speechless, at his feet; then jumping on deck, kept pacing to and fro in no very pleasant mood; but on perceiving Emms still struggling to get up, he leaped into the boat a second time, and called one of the sailors to follow him. The poor fellow, on seeing the captain, called out for mercy; but in his wrath the captain forgot mercy, and laid him again senseless at his feet, then ordered him to be thrown overboard! Immediately on throwing the man into the sea, Mr. Fox made signs to some Indians, who dragged him into their canoe and paddled off to shore. During this scene, no one interfered; for the captain, in his frantic fits of passion, was capable of going any lengths, and would rather have destroyed the expedition, the ship, and every one on board, than be thwarted in what he considered as ship discipline, or his nautical duties.

In the evening, the Indians brought Emms again to the ship. Here the little fellow implored forgiveness, and begged to be taken on board; but the captain was inexorable, and threatened him with instant death if he attempted to come alongside. Soon after he made his appearance again, but with no better effect. He then asked for his protection, a paper which the American sailors generally take with them to sea. The captain returning no answer to this request, Mr. Fox contrived to throw his clothes and protection overboard unperceived, at the same time making signs to the Indians to convey them to Emms. On receiving the little bundle, he remained for some time without uttering a word; at last, bursting into tears, he implored again and again to be admitted on board, but to no purpose. All hopes now vanishing, the heroic little fellow, standing up in the canoe, took off his cap, and waving it in the air, with a sorrowful heart bade adieu to his shipmates; the canoe then paddled to land, and we saw him no more.

Our supplies being now completed, the king came on board before our departure; and it will appear something surprising that the honest and wealthy monarch, forgetting the rank and pomp of royalty, should at his parting visit covet everything he saw with us: he even expressed a wish to see the contents of our trunks; he begged a handkerchief from me, a penknife from another, a pair of shoes from a third, a hat from a fourth, and when refused, talked of his kindness to us on shore; while, on the other hand, he bowed low when presented with a breastpin, a few needles, or paper-cased looking-glass, not worth a groat. Even the cabin-boy and cook were not forgotten by this "King of the Isles," for he asked a piece of black-ball from the former, and an old saucepan from the latter. His avarice and meanness in these respects had no bounds, and we were all greatly relieved when he bade us farewell and departed.

Having taken leave of his majesty, I shall now make a few remarks on the habits, dress, and language of the natives.

The Sandwich Islanders are bold swimmers, and expert navigators. They are like ducks in the water. As soon as we had cast anchor in Karakakooa Bay the natives, men and women, indiscriminately flocked about the ship in great numbers: some swimming, others in canoes, but all naked, although the *Tonquin* lay a mile from the shore. Few, however, being admitted on board at once (probably a necessary precaution), the others waited very contentedly floating on the surface of the water alongside, amusing themselves now and then by plunging and playing round the ship. After passing several hours in this way, they would then make a simultaneous start for the land, diving and plunging, sporting and playing, like so many seals or fish in a storm all the way. During their gambols about the ship, we often amused ourselves by dropping a button, nail, or pin into the water; but such was their keenness of sight and their agility, that the trifle had scarcely penetrated the surface of the water before it was in their possession; nothing could escape them. On one occasion a ship's block happening to fall overboard, one of the natives was asked to dive for it in thirty-six feet of water; but after remaining three minutes and fifty seconds under water he came up unsuccessful; another tried it and succeeded, after being under water four minutes and twelve seconds: the blood, however, burst from his nose and ears immediately after.

Their voyaging canoes are made to ride on the roughest water with safety by means of a balance or outrigger shaped like a boat's keel, and attached to the canoe at the distance of five feet by two slender beams. The canoe goes fully as well with as without the balance, skipping on the surface of the water as if no such appendage accompanied it. When the swell or surge strikes the canoe on the balance side, the weight of the outrigger prevents its upsetting, and when on the opposite side the buoyancy of the outrigger, now sunk in the water, has the same effect.

The climate here is so very mild and warm that the natives seldom wear any clothing, and when they do, it is of their own manufacture, and extremely simple. The inner bark of different trees (the touta in particular) is prepared by beating it into a pulp or soft thin web, not unlike grey paper, called tuppa. The common people wear it in this raw state, but the better sort paint it with various colours, resembling printed cotton. Tappa is as strong as cartridge paper, but not so thick, and can answer for clothing only in dry climates. The common dress of the men consists of a piece of this tappa, about ten inches broad and nine feet long, like a belt, called maro. The maro is thrown carelessly round the loins, then passed between the thighs, and tied on the left side. The females wear the pow or pau, a piece of tappa similar to the maro, only a little broader, and worn in the same manner; but the queens had on, in addition to the pow, a loose mantle or shawl thrown round the body, called kihei, which consisted of twenty-one folds of tappa; yet when compressed it did not equal in thickness an English blanket. The kihei is generally worn by persons of distinction, but seldom of more than two or three folds, excepting among the higher ranks. Like a Chinese mandarin, a lady here makes known her rank by her dress, and by the number of folds in her kihei.

A custom prevalent here, and which is, I believe, peculiar to these islanders, is, that the women always eat apart from the men, and are forbidden the use of pork. The favourite dish among all classes is raw fish, mashed or pounded in a mortar. Considering their rude and savage life, these people are very cleanly. The houses of all classes are lined and decorated with painted tappa, and the floors overspread with variegated mats. The women are handsome in person, engaging in their manners, well featured, and have countenances full of joy and tranquillity; but chastity is not their virtue.

The king's will is the paramount law of the land, but he is represented as a mild and generous sovereign, invariably friendly to the whites whom choice or accident has thrown on these islands. To those who behave well the king allots land, and gives them slaves to work it. He protects both them and their property, and is loth ever to punish an evildoer. Near Ourourah we saw eight or ten white men comfortably settled; and upwards of thirty others naked and wild among the natives, wretched unprincipled vagabonds, of almost every nation in Europe, without clothing and without either house or home.

I have already noticed the principal esculent vegetables growing here; there are also some beautiful kinds of wood; that called koeye, of which the war spears or pahooas are made, and sandal-wood, are the kinds most highly esteemed among the natives for their hardness and polish. The cocoa-nut, in clumps here and there, forms delightful groves, and these are often frequented by the industrious females for the purpose of manufacturing and painting their tappa — preferring the cool shade and open air to the heat of a dwelling-house.

At the place where Captain Cook was killed, which we visited soon after our arrival, were still a few old and shattered cocoa-nut trees, pierced with the shot from his ships; and a flat coral rock, at the water's edge, is still pointed out to strangers as the fatal spot where he fell.

The chief weapon used in their warfare is the pahooa or spear, 12 feet long, polished, barbed, and painted. It is poised and thrown with the right hand with incredible force and precision. His majesty ordered fifty men to parade one day, and invited us to see them exercising, and we were certainly much gratified and astonished at their skill in throwing and parrying the weapons.

After going through several manœuvres, the king picked four of the best marksmen out, and ordered one of them to stand at a certain point; the three others at a distance of sixty yards from him, all armed with pahooas, and facing one another. The three last mentioned were to dart their spears at the single man, and he to parry them off or catch them in passing. Each of the three had twelve pahooas; the single man but one. Immediately after taking his position the single man put himself upon his guard, by skipping and leaping from right to left with the quickness of lightning: the others, equally on the alert, prepared to throw. All eyes were now anxiously intent; presently one threw his spear, at a short interval the next followed; as did the third—two at a time next threw, and then all three let fly at once, and continued to throw without intermission until the whole thirty-six spears were spent, which was done in less than three minutes. The single man, who was placed like a target to be shot at, defended himself nobly with the spear he had in his hand, and sent those of his opponents whistling in every direction, for he had either to parry them off like a skilful boxer, or be run through on the spot; but such was the agility with which he shifted from one position to another, and managed the spear with his right hand, that he seemed rather to be playing and amusing himself than seriously engaged, for twice or thrice he dexterously seized his opponent's spear at the moment it came in contact with his own, allowing at the same time the latter to fly off, and this shifting or exchanging spears is thought a masterpiece, being the most difficult and dangerous manœuvre in the whole affair, and it is only an adept that can attempt it with safety. When all was over, the man had received a slight wound on the left arm; but it happens not unfrequently that he who is thus placed is killed on the spot; for if he allows the spear to be knocked out of his hand without catching another, he is almost sure to fall, as the throwers are not allowed to stop while a pahooa remains with them, and every weapon is hurled with a deadly intention.

The king is said to be a dexterous pahooa man himself, and it was his prowess and knowledge in war, and not his rank, that made him sovereign of these islands. After the people had dispersed, the man who had acted so conspicuous a part in the exhibition just described, came to us and offered to risk his life for a handkerchief, at the distance of twenty yards; telling us to select the best marksman among us, with a fowlingpiece either with shot or ball, and he would stand before him, and either win the handkerchief or lose his life! We were not disposed, however, to accept the challenge, but gave the fellow a handkerchief and sent him about his business.

All the islands of this group, excepting one, have acknowledged Tammeatameah as their king, and the jarring interests and feuds of the different islands have at last sunk into a system of union which, if we may judge from appearance, renders this country, under its present government, an earthly paradise, and the inhabitants thereof as free from care, and perhaps as happy, as any in the globe;—but mark! civilized man has now begun to trade on its innocent and peaceful soil: there is an end, therefore, to all primeval simplicity and happiness.

These people speak with a quickness which almost baffles imitation; and in very many instances, the same word is repeated twice. The language is bold and masculine; and, although the accent be clear, is very difficult to be attained by the whites.

We shall now take our leave of the friendly and hospitable natives of these islands. On his majesty leaving the ship, a boat was sent to shore for a few remaining articles;- meantime, preparations were made for weighing anchor. The wind from the sea beginning to blow retarded the boat's return; and the delay so nettled our worthy commander, that he gave orders to set sail, and the ship stood out to sea, leaving the boat to follow as she could. The wind soon increasing to a gale, the boat had to struggle with a tempestuous sea for six hours, during which time we expected every minute to witness her destruction. The Falkland Island affair was yet fresh in our minds, and this seemed to equal, if not surpass it in cruelty. At length, however, the ship bore down, and with much difficulty rescued the boat's crew from a watery grave.

## CHAPTER IV.

**Departure from the Sandwich Islands—Bad weather—Live stock destroyed—Columbia River—A boat and crew lost—Captain's conduct towards Mr. Fox—Mouth of the river—Bar and breakers—Cape Disappointment—Point Adams—Narrow escape of the long boat—Sounding the bar—A boat and crew left to perish—The ship in the breakers—Critical situation—Melancholy narrative of Steven Weeks—Search made for the lost boat, and narrow escape—Long boat swamped—Fidelity of the natives—Preparations for leaving the ship—Captain Thorn—The voyage concluded.**

ON the 1st of March 1811, we took our departure from the Sandwich Islands; steering direct for Columbia River. The first step taken, after leaving the land, was to liberate those who had been put in irons. Poor fellows! they considered themselves particularly unfortunate, and doubly punished, in not having been partakers of the pleasures which the others had enjoyed on shore. All our thoughts now tended to one point; and the hope of soon terminating a long and irksome voyage made us forget all former misunderstandings, and a few days passed in harmony and good-fellowship, until the 12th, when the weather becoming squally and cold, with snow and sleet, the partners wished to serve out some articles of clothing to the passengers, who now began to feel very sensibly the change of climate; but the captain considered the broaching of a bale or box as an encroachment on his authority, and a violation of ship rules, and therefore steadily opposed it. This gave rise to bad blood on both sides. The partners swore they would have such articles as they wanted; the captain swore they should touch nothing. The dispute went to such a height that pistols were resorted to, and all, from stem to stern, seemed for a moment involved in the flame of civil war; but on this, as on a former occasion, Mr. David Stuart and some others interfering brought about a reconciliation. The partners desisted; the captain kept his bales and boxes untouched; and the men froze in the icy rigging of the ship until many of them were obliged to take to their hammocks.

On the 14th, in lat. 37° N. and long 137° W., a violent gale came on, which increased almost to a hurricane, and lasted four days without intermission, during which we were much puzzled in manœuvring the ship. She had sprung a leak, but not seriously. Sometimes we had to let her scud before the wind; sometimes she lay-to; sometimes under one sail, sometimes under another, labouring greatly; and much anxiety was felt by all on board. During this storm, almost everything on deck was carried off or dashed to pieces; all our live stock were either killed or washed overboard; and so bad was the weather, first with rain, and then with sleet, hail, frost, and snow, which froze on the rigging as it fell, that there was no bending either ropes or sails, and the poor sailors were harassed to death. But bad and harassing as this state of things was, it proved to be only the beginning of our troubles, and a prelude to far greater trials. During this gale, we sustained considerable damage in the sails and rigging, besides the loss of our live stock, and other things on board.

On the 22nd of March, we came in sight of land, which, on a nearer approach, proved to be Cape Disappointment, a promontory forming the north side of the Great Oregon or Columbia River. The sight filled every heart with gladness. But the cloudy and stormy state of the weather prevented us seeing clearly the mouth of the river; being then about ten miles from land. The aspect of the coast was wild and dangerous, and for some time the ship lay-to, until the captain could satisfy himself that it was the entrance of the river; which he had no sooner done, than Mr. Fox, the first mate, was ordered to go and examine the channel on the bar. At half-past one o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Fox left the ship, having with him one sailor, a very old Frenchman, and three Canadian lads, unacquainted with sea service—two of them being carters from La Chine, and the other a Montreal barber. Mr. Fox objected to such hands; but the captain refused to change them, adding, that he had none else to spare. Mr. Fox then represented the impossibility of performing the business in such weather, and on such a rough sea, even with the best seamen, adding, that the waves were too high for any boat to live in. The captain, turning sharply round, said—"Mr. Fox, if you are afraid of water, you should have remained at Boston." On this Mr. Fox immediately ordered the boat to be lowered, and the men to embark. If the crew was bad, the boat was still worse—being scarcely seaworthy, and very small. While this was going on, the partners, who were all partial to Mr. Fox, began to sympathize with him, and to intercede with the captain to defer examining the bar till a favourable change took place in the weather. But he was deaf to entreaties, stamped, and swore that a combination was formed to frustrate all his designs. The partners' interference, therefore, only riveted him the more in his determination, and Mr. Fox was peremptorily ordered to proceed. He, seeing that the captain was immoveable, turned to the partners with tears in his eyes, and said—"My uncle was drowned here not many years ago, and now I am going to lay my bones with his." He then shook hands with all around him, and bade them adieu. Stepping into the boat—"Farewell, my friends!" said he; "we will perhaps meet again in the next world." And the words were prophetic.

The moment the boat pushed off, all hands crowded in silence to take a last farewell of her. The weather was boisterous, and the sea rough, so that we often lost sight of the boat before she got 100 yards from the ship; nor had she gone that far before she became utterly unmanageable, sometimes broaching broadside to the foaming surges, and at other times almost whirling round like a top, then tossing on the crest of a huge wave would sink again for a time and disappear altogether. At last she hoisted the flag; the meaning could not be mistaken; we knew it was a signal of distress. At this instant all the people crowded round the captain, and implored him to try and save the boat; but in an angry tone he ordered about ship, and we saw the ill-fated boat no more.

Mr. Fox was not only an able officer, but an experienced seaman, and a great favourite among all classes on board; and this circumstance, I fear, proved his ruin, for his uniform kindness and affability to the passengers had from the commencement of the voyage drawn down upon his head the ill-will of his captain; and his being sent off on the present perilous and forlorn undertaking, with such awkward and inexperienced hands, whose language he did not understand, is a proof of that ill-will.

The mouth of Columbia River is remarkable for its sand-bars and high surf at all seasons, but more particularly in the spring and fall, during the equinoctial gales: these sand-bars frequently shift, the channel of course shifting along with them, which renders the passage at all times extremely dangerous. The bar, or rather the chain of sand-banks, over which the huge waves and foaming breakers roll so awfully, is a league broad, and extends in a white foaming sheet for many miles, both south and north of the mouth of the river, forming as it were an impracticable barrier to the entrance, and threatening with instant destruction everything that comes near it.

The river at its mouth is 4½ miles broad, confined by Cape Disappointment on the north, and Point Adams on the south; the former is a rocky cliff or promontory, rising about 500 feet above the level of the water, and covered on the top with a few scattered trees of stinted growth; the latter a low sandy point, jutting out about 300 yards into the river, directly opposite to Cape Disappointment: the deepest water is near the Cape, but the channel is both narrow and intricate. The country is low, and the impervious forests give to the surrounding coast a wild and gloomy aspect.

After the captain ordered about ship, as already stated, some angry words passed between himself and Mr. Mumford, the second officer, which ended in the latter being ordered below. After passing an anxious night, the return of day only increased the anxiety, and every mind was filled with gloomy apprehensions. In the course of this day, Mr. Mumford resumed his duties, and the ship kept beating off and on till noon, when she cast anchor in fourteen fathoms, about a mile from the breakers; and the weather becoming calm, Mr. M'Kay, Mr. David Stuart, myself, and several others, embarking in the long boat, which was well manned and armed, stood in for the shore, in hopes of being able to effect a landing. On approaching the bar, the terrific chain of breakers, which keep rolling one after another in awful succession, completely overpowered us with dread; and the fearful suction or current became so irresistibly great, that, before we were aware of it, the boat was drawn into them, and became unmanageable: at this instant, Mr. Mumford, who was at the helm, called out, "Let us turn back, and pull for your lives; pull hard, or you are all dead men." In turning round, the boat broached broadside to the surf, and was for some time in imminent danger of being engulfed or dashed to pieces; and, although every effort was made, we were for twelve minutes struggling in this perilous situation, between hope and despair, before we got clear, or the boat obeyed the oars, and yet we were still two miles from the shore; and, had it not been for the prompt and determined step taken by Mr. Mumford, the boat and every soul on board of it must have inevitably perished. Notwithstanding our narrow escape, we made a second and third attempt, but without success, and then returned to the ship. The same afternoon, Mr. Mumford was sent more to the south to seek for a channel, but to no purpose. The charts were again examined, and every preparation made for next morning.

On the 25th, early in the morning, Mr. Mumford was again ordered in another direction to go and discover if possible the proper channel, and ascertain the depth of water. After several trials, in one or two of which the boat got again entangled in the breakers, and had a very narrow escape, she at length came into 2½ fathoms of water, and then returned; but the captain seemed to hint that Mr. Mumford had not done so much as he might have done, or in other words, he was dissatisfied; indeed, his mind was not in a state to be satisfied with anything, not even with himself; but his officers, whatever they did, were sure to displease.

The captain now called on Mr. Aikens, the third mate, and ordered him to go and sound in a more northerly direction, and if he found 3½ fathoms water to hoist a flag as a signal. At three o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Aikens, together with the sail-maker, armourer, and two Sandwich Islanders, embarked in the pinnace, and proceeded to the bar. As soon as the pinnace hoisted the flag agreed upon, the ship weighed anchor and stood in for the channel; at the same time the boat, pulling back from the bar, met the ship about half a mile from the breakers, in eight fathoms, going in with a gentle sea-breeze, at the rate of three knots an hour.

As the ship and boat drew near to each other, the latter steered a little aside to be out of the ship's way, then lay upon her oars in smooth water, waiting to be taken on board, while the ship passed on within twenty yards of th[illegible] in silence; nor did the people in the boat speak a single word. As soon as the ship had passed, and no motion made to take the boat on board, every one appeared thunderstruck, and Mr. M'Kay was the first that spoke,—"Who," said he, "is going to throw a rope to the boat?" No one answered; but by this time she had fallen astern, and began to pull after the ship. Every one now called out, "The boat, the boat!" The partners, in astonishment, entreated the captain to take the boat on board, but he coolly replied, "I can give them no assistance." Mr. Mumford said it would not be the work of a minute. "Back a sail, throw a rope overboard," cried the partners; the answer was, "No, I will not endanger the ship." We now felt convinced that the boat and crew were devoted to destruction—no advice was given them, no assistance offered, no reasons assigned for risking so cruel a sacrifice of human life—for the place where the boat met us was entirely free from the influence of the breakers, and a long way from the bar. It is impossible, therefore, to account for the cool indifference manifested towards the fated boat and her crew, unless we suppose that the mind of the captain was so absorbed in apprehension, and perplexed with anxiety at the danger which stared him in the face, and which he was about to encounter in a few minutes, that he could not be brought to give a thought to anything else but the safety of the ship.

During this time the ship was drawing nearer and nearer to the breakers, which called our attention from the boat to look out for our own safety; but she was seen for some time struggling hard to follow the ship as we entered the breakers, the sight of which was appalling. On the ship making the first plunge, every countenance looked dismay; and the sun, at the time just sinking below the horizon, seemed to say, "Prepare for your last." Mr. Mumford was now ordered to the mast-head, to point out the channel. The water decreasing from 8 to 2¼ fathoms, she struck tremendously on the second reef or shoal; and the surges breaking over her stern overwhelmed everything on deck. Every one who could, sprang aloft, and clung for life to the rigging. The waves at times broke ten feet high over her, and at other times she was in danger of foundering: she struck again and again, and, regardless of her helm, was tossed and whirled in every direction, and became completely unmanageable. Night now began to spread an impenetrable gloom over the turbulent deep. Dark, indeed, was that dreadful night. We had got about a mile into the breakers, and not far from the rocks at the foot of the Cape, against which the foaming surges wreaked their fury unceasingly. Our anxiety was still further increased by the wind dying away, and the tide still ebbing. At this instant, some one called out, "We are all lost, the ship is among the rocks." A desperate effort was then made to let go the anchors—two were thrown overboard; the sails kept flapping for some time: nor was the danger diminished by learning the fact that the surf dragged ship, anchors, and all, along with it. But there is a limit to all things: hour after hour had passed, and terrific was the sight; yet our faithful bark still defied the elements, until the tide providentially beginning to flow—just at a time when it appeared as if no earthly power could save us from a watery grave—brought about our deliverance by carrying the ship along with it into Baker's Bay, snug within the Cape, where we lay in safety.

Here are two points for consideration; first, the time of sounding: and, secondly, the time chosen for entering the breakers. In respect to both, there was an unwarrantable precipitation—a manifest want of sound judgment. We made the land in the middle of a storm, the channel and coast both unknown to us, and without either pilot or guide: under such circumstances, it was evident to all that no boat could live on the water at the time, far less reach the shore; and our entering the breakers at so late an hour, the sun at the time not being fifty minutes above the horizon, the channel also being unexplored, was certainly a premature and forlorn undertaking: but there existed such disunion—such a spirit of contradiction on board—that the only wonder is how we ever got so far. But I must now inform the reader what became of the boat.

In the morning of the 26th, Captain Thorn, Mr. M'Kay, myself, and a few men, left the ship, to take a view of the coast from the top of Cape Disappointment, to try if we could learn any tidings of the boats. We had not proceeded fifty yards, when we saw Steven Weeks, the armourer, standing under the shelter of a rock, shivering and half-dead with cold. Joy for a moment filled our hearts, and running up to the poor fellow, we inquired for his comrades, but could get no satisfactory reply; we then brought him to the ship, and, after giving him some food, resumed our inquiries; but he appeared so overpowered with grief and vexation, that we could scarcely get a word from him; in short, he seemed to reproach us bitterly. "You did it purposely," said he, in great agitation; but after some time, and when we had first told him what we had suffered, he seemed to come round, as if his feelings were soothed by the recital of our dangers; and then he related his melancholy tale, in the following words:—

"After the ship passed us we pulled hard to follow her, thinking every moment you would take us on board; but when we saw her enter the breakers we considered ourselves as lost. We tried to pull back again, but in vain; for we were drawn into the breakers in spite of all we could do. We saw the ship make two or three heavy plunges; but just at this time we ourselves were struck with the boiling surf, and the boat went reeling in every direction; in an instant a heavy sea swamped her—poor Mr. Aikens and John Coles were never seen after. As soon as I got above the surface of the water, I kept tossing about at the mercy of the waves. While in this state I saw the two Sandwich Islanders struggling

In the evening the Sandwich Islander who died in the boat was interred on the beach where the boat came ashore; the other poor fellow was carried to the ship, and afterwards recovered.

On the 27th I was appointed to head a party to go in search of the boat that was lost on the 22nd; but after examining the coast for upwards of forty miles southwards, not a trace of our missing friends was discovered, nor did we ever learn any tidings of them.

We had on this occasion a specimen of Chinooke navigation. While crossing the river in an Indian canoe, on our way back to the ship, we were suddenly overtaken by a storm, and our craft was upset in the middle of the passage. The expertness of the natives in their favourite element was here put to the test. At this time we were upwards of two miles from the shore, while eight persons unable to swim were floating in every direction; coats, hats, and everything else adrift, and all depending on the fidelity of the four Indians who undertook to carry us over; yet, notwithstanding the roughness of the water, and the wind blowing a gale at the time, these poor fellows kept swimming about like so many fishes, righted the canoe, and got us all into her again, while they themselves staid in the water, with one hand on the canoe and the other paddling. In this manner they supported themselves, tossing to and fro, till we bailed the water out of our frail craft, and got under weigh again. Here it was that the Indians showed the skill and dexterity peculiar to them. The instant the canoe rose on the top of a wave, those on the windward side darted down their long paddles to the armpits in the water to prevent her from upsetting; while those on the leeside at the same moment pulled theirs up, but kept ready as soon as the wave had passed under her to thrust them down again in a similar manner, and thus by their alternate movements they kept the canoe steady, so that we got safe to shore without another upset, and with the loss of only a few articles of clothing; but we suffered severely from wet and cold.

During this time the Indians from the village which we had left, seeing our critical situation, had manned and sent off two canoes to our assistance. One of the boats from the ship was also despatched for the same purpose; but all would have proved too late had we not been fortunate enough of ourselves to weather the storm.

The Indians all the time never lost their presence of mind. Indeed, it was supposed, from the skilful manner in which they acted afterwards, that the sordid rascals had upset us wilfully, in order to claim the merit of having saved us, and therewith a double recompense for their trip. The boat which had put off to our assistance was upset on her return to the ship; and had it not been for the two Indian canoes that followed us, its crew would have all perished.

On the 4th of April the long boat was swamped off Chinooke Point, when ten persons were saved by Comecomly and his people. On this occasion, however, many articles of value were lost, so that every hour admonished us that we stepped on insecure and slippery ground. Every succeeding day was marked by some new and alarming disaster; but a few remarks will now suffice to conclude the account of our voyage, in which we sailed, according to the ship's log, 21,852 miles.

Captain Thorn was an able and expert seaman; but, unfortunately, his treatment of the people under his command was strongly tinctured with cruelty and despotism. He delighted in ruling with a rod of iron; his officers were treated with harshness, his sailors with cruelty, and every one else was regarded by him with contempt. With a jealous and peevish temper, he was easily excited; and the moment he heard the Scotch Highlanders speak to each other in the Scottish dialect, or the Canadians in the French language, he was on his high horse, making every one on board as unhappy as himself; and this brings us down to the period of our departure from the ship, a period to which we all anxiously looked forward, and the satisfaction both felt and expressed was universal, when the general order was read that all the passengers should prepare to land on the following day.

## CHAPTER V.

Preparations for landing—Site of the new emporium of the west—Astor's representative—Hard work—Huge trees—Natives—Comecomly—Mode of felling the trees—Danger—Trying scenes—Three men killed—Three wounded—Party reduced by sickness—Disaffection—Conduct of the deputy—Desertion—Mr. Astor's policy—Climate—Indian rumours—Comecomly's intrigues and policy—Trip to the cascades—Mr. M'Kay and north-west notions—Anecdote—Exploring party to the north—Several persons killed—Hostile threats of the Indians—Potatoes and other seeds planted—New building—Astoria—Departure of the ship—Dangerous situation of the whites—Great assemblage of Indians—People under arms—Blunderbuss accident—Alarming moment—Two strangers arrive—Mr. Thompson at Astoria—M'Dougall's policy—The two great functionaries.

For some days, much time was spent in examining both sides of the inlet, with the view of choosing a suitable place to build on. At last it was settled that the new establishment should be erected on the south side, on a small rising ground situate between Point George on the west and Tonquin Point on the east, distant twelve miles from the mouth of the inlet or bar.

On the 12th of April, therefore, the whole party, consisting of thirty-three persons, all British subjects excepting three (eleven Sandwich Islanders being included in that number), left the ship and encamped on shore.

However pleasing the change, to be relieved from a long and tedious voyage, and from the tyranny of a sullen despotic captain, the day was not one of pleasure, but of labour. The misfortunes we had met with in crossing the fatal bar had deadened all sensibility, and cast a melancholy gloom over our most sanguine expectations. In our present position, everything harmonized with our feelings, to darken our future prospects. Silent and with heavy hearts we began the toil of the day, in clearing away brush and rotten wood for a spot to encamp on.

The person who now assumed the command was the deputy-agent, Duncan M'Dougall, Esq., an old north-western, who, in the absence of Mr. Hunt, held the first place in Mr. Astor's confidence. He was a man of but ordinary capacity, with an irritable, peevish temper; the most unfit man in the world to head an expedition or command men.

From the site of the establishment, the eye could wander over a varied and interesting scene. The extensive Sound, with its rocky shores, lay in front; the breakers on the bar, rolling in wild confusion, closed the view on the west; on the east, the country as far as the Sound had a wild and varied aspect; while towards the south, the impervious and magnificent forest darkened the landscape, as far as the eye could reach. The place thus selected for the emporium of the west, might challenge the whole continent to produce a spot of equal extent presenting more difficulties to the settler: studded with gigantic trees of almost incredible size, many of them measuring fifty feet in girth, and so close together, and intermingled with huge rocks, as to make it a work of no ordinary labour to level and clear the ground. With this task before us, every man, from the highest to the lowest, was armed with an axe in one hand and a gun in the other; the former for attacking the woods, the latter for defence against the savage hordes which were constantly prowling about. In the garb of labourers, and in the sweat of our brow, we now commenced earning our bread. In this manner we all kept toiling and tearing away, from sunrise till sunset—from Monday till Saturday; and during the nights we kept watch without intermission.

On our first arrival, the natives of the place appeared very friendly towards us, owing no doubt to some trifling presents which they now and then received from us; but still, circumstances occurred occasionally which indicated treachery, and kept us always on our guard, against the more distant tribes in particular, for their attitude was invariably shy and hostile. Our ill opinion of them proved but too true in the sequel; but we had all along received every assurance of fidelity and protection from Comecomly, the principal chief of the place, and in him we reposed much confidence.

The frame of a coasting vessel, to be named the *Dolly*, was brought out on board the *Tonquin*, and as soon as we had got a spot cleared, the carpenters were set to work, to fit her up for immediate service; but the smallness of her size, of only thirty tons, rendered her useless for any purpose but that of navigating the river.

It would have made a cynic smile to see this pioneer corps, composed of traders, shopkeepers, voyageurs, and Owhyhees, all ignorant alike in this new walk of life, and the most ignorant of all, the leader. Many of the party had never handled an axe before, and but few of them knew how to use a gun, but necessity, the mother of invention, soon taught us both. After placing our guns in some secure place at hand, and viewing the height and the breadth of the tree to be cut down, the party, with some labour, would erect a scaffold round it; this done, four men—for that was the number appointed to each of those huge trees—would then mount the scaffold, and commence cutting, at the height of eight or ten feet from the ground, the handles of our axes varying, according to circumstances, from two and a half to five feet in length. At every other stroke, a look was cast round, to see that all was safe; but the least rustling among the bushes caused a general stop; more or less time was thus lost in anxious suspense. After listening and looking round, the party resumed their labour, cutting and looking about alternately. In this manner the day would be spent, and often to little purpose: as night often set in before the tree begun with in the morning was half cut down. Indeed, it sometimes required two days, or more, to fell one tree; but when nearly cut through, it would be viewed fifty different times, and from as many different positions, to ascertain where it was likely to fall, and to warn parties of the danger.

There is an art in felling a tree, as well as in planting one; but unfortunately none of us had learned that art, and hours together would be spent in conjectures and discussions: one calling out that it would fall here; another, there; in short, there were as many opinions as there were individuals about it; and, at last, when all hands were assembled to witness the fall, how often were we disappointed! the tree would still stand erect, bidding defiance to our efforts, while every now and then some of the most impatient or fool-hardy would venture to jump on the scaffold and give a blow or two more. Much time was often spent in this desultory manner, before the mighty tree gave way; but it seldom came to the ground. So thick was the forest, and so close the trees together, that in its fall it would often rest its ponderous top on some other friendly tree; sometimes a number of them would hang together, keeping us in awful suspense, and giving us double labour to extricate the one from the other, and when we had so far succeeded, the removal of the monster stump was the work of days. The tearing up of the roots was equally arduous, although less dangerous: and when this last operation was got through, both tree and stump had to be blown to pieces by gunpowder before either could be removed from the spot.

Nearly two months of this laborious and incessant toil had passed, and we had scarcely yet an acre of ground cleared. In the mean time three of our men were killed by the natives, two more wounded by the falling of trees, and one had his hand blown off by gunpowder.

But the labour, however trying, we were prepared to undergo. It was against neglect and ill-treatment that our feelings revolted. The people suffered greatly from the humidity of the climate. The Sandwich Islanders, used to a dry, pure atmosphere, sank under its influence; damp fogs and sleet were frequent, and every other day was a day of rain. Such is the climate of Columbia at this season of the year, and all this time we were without tents or shelter; add to this the bad quality of our food, consisting solely of boiled fish and wild roots, without even salt, and we had to depend at all times on the success or good-will of the natives for our daily supply, which was far from being regular; so that one-half of the party, on an average, were constantly on the sick list; and on more than one occasion I have seen the whole party so reduced that scarcely one could help the other, and all this chiefly owing to the conduct of Mr. Astor; first, in not sending out a medical man with the party; and, secondly, in his choice of the great pasha, M'Dougall, whom he placed at the head of his affairs. The sick and the sound both fared alike; the necessities of both were overlooked, while he, himself, was served in state; for a good many articles of provision had been put on shore before the ship sailed.

Our hard labour by day, with the watching during night, had not only reduced our party by sickness to a mere nothing, but raised a spirit of discontent, and plots and plans were set on foot to abandon all, and cross the continent by land. This extravagant resolution was, however, overruled by the more moderate of the malcontents, yet it resulted in a party waiting on M'Dougall with the view of bettering the existing state of things, and opening his eyes to his own situation; but this produced no good effect; it rather augmented the evil; and a second deputation proved equally unsuccessful. At last four men deserted, and had proceeded eighty miles up the river when they were laid hold of by the Indians and kept in a tent; nor would the stern and crafty chief of the tribe deliver them up until he had received a ransom for them.

Yet all this could not open the eyes of M'Dougall, nor was it till he had rashly ventured to provoke all classes, that he began to see clearly that he was standing on the verge of a precipice. Everything at through the surf to get hold of the boat, and being expert swimmers they succeeded. After long struggles they got her turned upon her keel, bailed out some of the water, and recovered one of the oars. I made several attempts to get near them, but the weight of my clothes and the rough sea had almost exhausted me. I could scarcely keep myself above water, and the Owhyhees were so much occupied about the boat, that they seemed to take no notice of anything else. In vain I tried to make signs, and to call out; every effort only sank me more and more. The tide had drawn the boat by this time out to sea, and almost free of the breakers, when the two islanders saw me, now supporting myself by a floating oar, and made for me. The poor fellows tried to haul me into the boat, but their strength failed them. At last, taking hold of my clothes in their teeth, they fortunately succeeded. We then stood out to sea as night set in, and a darker one I never saw. The Owhyhees, overcome with wet and cold, began to lose hope, and their fortitude forsook them, so that they lay down despairingly in the boat, nor could I arouse them from their drowsy stupor. When I saw that I had nothing to expect from them, I set to sculling the boat myself, and yet it was with much ado I could stand on my legs. During the night one of the Indians died in despair, and the other seemed to court death, for he lost all heart, and would not utter a single word. When the tide began to flow I was roused by the sense of my danger, for the sound of the breakers grew louder and louder, and I knew if I got entangled in them in my exhausted state all was lost; I, therefore, set too with might and main, as a last effort, to keep the boat out to sea, and at daylight I was within a quarter of a mile of the breakers, and about double that distance short of the Cape. I paused for a moment, 'What is to be done?' I said to myself; 'death itself is preferable to this protracted struggle.' So, turning the head of my boat for shore, I determined to reach the land or die in the attempt. Providence favoured my resolution, the breakers seemed to aid in hurrying me out of the watery element; and the sun had scarcely risen when the boat was thrown up high and dry on the beach. I had much ado to extricate myself from her, and to drag my benumbed limbs along. On seeing myself once more on dry land, I sat down and felt a momentary relief; but this was followed by gloomy reflections. I then got into the boat again, and seeing the poor islander still alive, but insensible, I hauled him out of the boat, and with much ado carried him to the border of the wood, when covering him with leaves I left him to die. While gathering the leaves I happened to come upon a beaten path, which brought me here." Such was Weeks's melancholy story: himself and the Indian being the only survivors of the last boat, it follows that eight men in all lost their lives in entering this fatal river.

this moment seemed at a stand; the folly and imprudence of the man in power had nearly extinguished all hopes of success. Another party of six men, headed by one of the Americans, deserted, but were brought back the third day by our friendly chief, Comecomly. We had some time ago found out that the sordid hope of gain alone attached this old and crafty chief to the whites.

The desertion of these parties, and the number confined by sickness, began now to admonish the man at the head of affairs that he had probably gone a step too far, and that it is much easier to destroy than restore confidence. He suddenly changed for the better; tents were distributed among the sick, and more attention was paid to their diet; still there was no medical man to attend the sufferers. In this case we surely look in vain for that sagacity and forethought which Mr. Astor was thought to possess. His own interest was involved in the result, and nothing could more clearly prove his reckless indifference for the lives of his people than his not providing a medical man of some kind or other, either for his ship or his infant colony.

But feuds and petty grievances among ourselves, arising chiefly from our minds being soured by hardships, were not the only obstacles we had to contend with; our weakness and forlorn situation began to open our eyes to a sense of common danger, and fear began to exercise its influence, so that unanimity alone could enable us to oppose a common enemy. Rumours from all quarters and suspicious appearances had raised an alarm that the distant tribes were forming some dark design of cutting us off, and reports countenancing this belief were daily brought us by Comecomly and his people. We now established a regular patrol of six men, which diminished our labouring body to a mere nothing; but under such circumstances self-preservation obliged us to adopt every precaution. Comecomly was sent for, and questioned on the occasion; but all we could learn from him was, that the hostile tribes were a very bad people, and ill-disposed towards the whites, and this we had no reason to disbelieve, because Comecomly and his people were the only Indians who had regularly traded with us; consequently, we were anxious to ascertain the cause of this rupture between us and the distant tribes.

We had now begun to pick up a few words of the language, and were given to understand that the crafty Chinookes, like the cat in the fable, had fomented and nourished the misunderstanding between us and the distant tribes; that they had artfully impressed the latter with the idea that we were hostile towards them, and, by the same crafty policy, assuring us of their enmity. By this stratagem, they kept them from coming near us—thereby monopolizing all the trade themselves, by buying up all the furs, and selling them again to us at double their first cost. As soon, however, as we were convinced of the intrigues of old Comecomly and his people, we set about counteracting them. For this purpose, several parties were sent up the country in different directions, to do away with the unfavourable impressions, and to convince the natives, far and near, of our friendly intentions to all.

On the 2nd of May, Mr. M'Kay, accompanied by Mr. Robert Stuart, in a small canoe, and four men, proceeded up the river to sound the dispositions of the Indians, and to assure them of our good-will towards them; and likewise to gain some information respecting the surrounding country and state of the water. Having proceeded as far as the cascades, a distance of 180 miles, made some presents to the principal men, and convinced all the different tribes they saw of the friendly intentions of the whites, the party returned again at the end of twelve days, reporting most favourably of both natives and country.

Mr. M'Kay had figured in the north-west as an Indian trader—was very active, but whimsical and eccentric. An anecdote will picture the man:—It is a habit among the grandees of the Indian trade to have May-poles with their names inscribed thereon on conspicuous places, not to dance round, but merely to denote that such a person passed there on such a day, or to commemorate some event. For this purpose, the tallest tree on the highest ground is generally selected, and all the branches are stripped off excepting a small tuft at the top.

On Mr. M'Kay's return from his reconnoitring expedition up the river, he ordered one of his men to climb a lofty tree and dress it for a May-pole. The man very willingly undertook the job, expecting, as usual on these occasions, to get a dram; but he had no sooner reached the top than his master, through love of mischief, lighting a fire at the bottom, set the tree in a blaze. The poor fellow was instantly enveloped in a cloud of smoke, and called out for mercy. Water was dashed on the tree; but this only increased the danger by augmenting the smoke, for the fire ran up the bark of the gummy pine like gunpowder, and was soon beyond our reach, so that all hope of saving the man's life was at an end. Descending a little, however, he leaped, in despair, on to a branch of another tree, which fortunately offered him a chance of safety; and there he hung between earth and heaven, like a squirrel on a twig, till another man, at no small risk, got up and rescued him from his perilous situation.

Soon after M'Kay's return from the cascades, Mr. Robert Stuart, myself, and five men, proceeded on an excursion to the north. It was here that we became fully acquainted with the dangerous effects of the Chinooke policy. The Indians, on our approach, flew to arms, and made signs for us to keep at a distance. We halted, and tried to moderate their ferocity by a display of presents; but they would not listen to us. Their forces were collecting fast; every moment's delay increased our danger; and, fearful of being surrounded, we were deliberating on a hasty retreat, when, fortunately, a friendly Indian happened to arrive, by means of whom we got into conversation with the others; and the result was, that they explained and cleared up the matter to our utmost satisfaction, and showed us several piles of furs laid up in store waiting the Chinooke traders; but when they saw and compared the prices we paid with that which the Chinookes were in the habit of giving them, they put their hands on their mouths in astonishment, and strongly urged us to return again, saying they would never more trade with the one-eyed chief. We got back again to the establishment on the fifteenth day; yet, notwithstanding the apparent friendly impression we had made on these sordid and treacherous rogues, we had a very narrow escape in crossing one of the rivers—for a party of them had got before us, taken up a strong position on the opposite bank, and disputed the passage; but, by a little manœuvring, we defeated their intentions. Soon afterwards, however, one of our men was killed by them; and on another occasion, a Mr. M'Kenzie and his whole party, consisting of eight men, were cut to pieces by them.

But we shall now return, for a moment, to notice what was going on at the establishment. On the fourth day after our landing, we planted some potatoes and sowed a few garden seeds, and on the 16th of May we laid the foundations of our first building; but in order to procure suitable timber for the purpose, we had to go back some distance—the wood on the site being so large and unmanageable; and for want of cattle to haul it, we had to carry it on our shoulders, or drag it along the ground—a task of no ordinary difficulty. For this purpose, eight men were harnessed, and they conveyed in six days all the timber required for a building or store of sixty feet long by twenty-six broad. On the 18th, as soon as the foundation was completed, the establishment was named Astoria, in honour of Astor, the projector of the enterprise.

The *Tonquin*, in the prosecution of her voyage along the coast, left Astoria on the 1st of June, and crossed the bar on the 5th, when we saw her for the last time. The captain had landed but a small part of the cargo, intending on his return to put the rest on shore; but with the ship all was lost, and Astoria, in consequence, was left almost destitute of the necessary articles of trade. Mr. M'Kay, as supercargo, went on board with Mr. Lewis and two Canadians; but Mr. Mumford, the second officer, was dismissed and sent on shore. On M'Kay's embarking, he called me aside, and taking me by the hand recommended his son to my care; then adding—"You see," said he, "how unfortunate we are: the captain, in one of his frantic fits, has now discharged the only officer on board," alluding to Mr. Mumford. "If you ever see us safe back, it will be a miracle." So saying, we parted, and he slept on board. The departure of the ship unfolded to us the danger of our situation. It is allowed by all experienced fur-traders, that in forming an establishment among savages, the first consideration is safety; and although we had been aware that the ship's stay protected the embryo settlement, and that her departure would proclaim to all the hostile tribes around our defenceless state, yet was there any preparation made for the event?—None. When the ship left us, not a gun was mounted; not a palisade raised; nor the least precaution taken to secure either life or property. Such was the character of the man whom Mr. Astor placed at the head of his affairs.

The Indians from all quarters now began to assemble in such swarms, that we had to relinquish all labour, and think only of defence. We naturally put the worst construction on so formidable an array of savages in arms. On the other hand, the arrival of the different tribes might have been produced by the steps we had lately taken in regard to the Chinooke policy, of assuring them of our friendly intentions; but the departure of the ship had left us so powerless and weak, that we could not help suspecting their intentions; and our suspicion was strengthened by the absence of Comecomly and his people, who had avoided coming near us ever since the arrival of the strangers. We had frequently sent for the crafty chief, but he as frequently disappointed us, until he was given to understand that a large present would be the reward of his good offices in the present emergency, for we had reason to believe that now, as on former occasions, he was very busy in labouring to conceal the truth, or, in other words, sowing the seeds of alienation, in order that he and his people might as usual engross all the foreign trade themselves.

At length Comecomly arrived; necessity compelled us to dissemble our opinion of his conduct: he was received with open arms, behaved well, and rendered us essential services. We now opened a friendly intercourse with the strangers; traded with each tribe in turn; made some presents; and they left us, apparently well satisfied with the friendly reception they had experienced, while we were no less agreeably relieved by their departure. The guard was reduced, and the people set to work as usual. Comecomly and his two sons received each a suit of chief's clothing; nor did they omit to insinuate, that to their influence and good offices we not only owed our safety, but were indebted for all the furs obtained from our distant visitors.

Some days afterwards, however, an awkward circumstance took place, which threatened to involve us again in serious troubles. While in the act of removing some leaf tobacco, an Indian was detected in the act of pilfering—for they are notorious thieves; the tobacco was taken from him, and he was reprimanded for his conduct. "What!" said the fellow, indignantly, "do you say I am a thief?" at the same time drawing his bow. M'Dougall then ordered him to be hand-cuffed and imprisoned, with a sentinel over him, in one of the deep but open pits, out of which a large tree had been dug. In the night, however, he contrived to effect his escape, carrying off not only his irons, but the sentinel's gun along with him. Next day Comecomly, accompanied by a large retinue, arrived at Astoria; the great mufti, as usual, was ushered into the tent of state. Here M'Dougall was showing the Chinooke Tye-yea, among other things, the properties of a blunderbuss, and in so doing made a woful blunder, for off went the piece unexpectedly, shattering a corner of his majesty's robe. The report and the dense smoke issuing from the place proclaimed danger, and the affrighted chief, darting out of the tent without his robe, cap, or gun, began calling to his people, who in a moment, giving the war-whoop and arming themselves, fiercely menaced the whites with destruction. In the mean time one of our sentinels, hearing the report of the gun, and seeing the tent enveloped in a cloud of smoke, and the chief running off at full speed from it, supposed that he had murdered M'Dougall, and fired after him, calling out treason! murder! at the sound of which our people flew to arms; and every man, with his finger on the trigger of his gun, advanced to the spot. M'Dougall and myself, who fortunately knew the circumstances, hastened to run in between the hostile ranks, making signs of peace, and after a tumultuous moment, the mysterious affair was explained without bloodshed; yet long afterwards the chief retained some suspicion that a plot had been formed against his life.

Among the many visitors who every now and then presented themselves, were two strange Indians, in the character of man and wife, from the vicinity of the Rocky Mountains, and who may probably figure in our narrative hereafter. The husband, named Ko-come-ne-pe-ca, was a very shrewd and intelligent Indian, who addressed us in the Algonquin language, and gave us much information respecting the interior of the country.

On the 15th of July, we were rather surprised at the unexpected arrival of a north-west proprietor at Astoria, and still more so at the free and cordial reception given to an opponent. Mr. Thompson, north-west-like, came dashing down the Columbia in a light canoe, manned with eight Iroquois and an interpreter, chiefly men from the vicinity of Montreal. M'Dougall received him like a brother; nothing was too good for Mr. Thompson; he had access everywhere; saw and examined everything; and whatever he asked for he got, as if he had been one of ourselves. Mr. Thompson at once recognised the two strange Indians, and gave us to understand that they were both females. His own visit had evidently no other object but to discourage us—a manœuvre of the North-West policy to extend their own trade at the expense of ours; but he failed. The dangers and difficulties, which he took great pains to paint in their worst colours, did not deter us. He forgot that in speaking to us, he was speaking to north-westerns—men as experienced and as cunning as himself. The

North-West had penetrated to the west side of the mountains as early as 1804, and had in 1811 two or three small posts on the waters of the Columbia, exclusive of the New Caledonia quarter. Every one knew this, and knowing it, how could we account for the more than warm and unreserved welcome Mr. Thompson met with from Astor's representative. Unless, as some thought at the time, M'Dougall was trying to pay Mr. Thompson back with his own coin, by putting on a fair face, so as to dupe him into an avowal of his real object. This is more than probable, for in point of acuteness, duplicity, and diplomatic craft, they were perhaps well matched.

## CHAPTER VI.

The ten tribes—Number of warriors—Their laws—Chief's arbitrary power—Dress, games, and arms of the men—Dress of the women, slaves, and basket-making—Lewdness of the women—Food, ornaments—The salmon—Superstitious customs—Sturgeon—Fathom-fish—Roots and berries—Circulating medium—Econé, or Good Spirit—Ecutoch, or Bad Spirit—Etaminua, or priests—Keelalles, or doctors—War canoes—Diseases—Winter houses—Temporary, or Summer houses—Fleas—Practice of flattening the head—Colonization—Wallamitte—Cowlitz, or Puget's Sound—Conclusion.

ALL the Indian tribes inhabiting the country about the mouth of the Columbia, and for a hundred miles round, may be classed in the following manner:—1. Chinooks;—2. Clatsops;—3. Cathlamux;—4. Wakicums;—5. Wacalamus;—6. Cattleputles;—7. Clatscanias;—8. Killimux;—9. Moltnomas;—and, 10. Chickelis; amounting collectively to about 2,000 warriors. But they are a commercial rather than a warlike people. Traffic in slaves and furs is their occupation. They are said to be decreasing in numbers. All these tribes appear to be descended from the same stock, live in rather friendly intercourse with, and resemble one another in language, dress, and habits. Their origin, like that of the other aborigines of the continent, is involved in fable, although they pretend to be derived from the musk-rat. Polygamy is common among them, and a man may have as many wives as he pleases, but he is bound to maintain his own children. In war, every man belonging to the tribe is bound to follow his chief; and a coward is often punished with death. All property is sacred in the eye of the law, nor can any one touch it excepting the principal chief, or head Tye-yea, who is above the law, or rather he possesses an arbitrary power without any positive check, so that if he conceive a liking to anything belonging to his subjects, be it a wife or a daughter, he can take it without infringing the law; but he must, nevertheless, pay for what he takes—and their laws assign a nominal value to property of every kind.

The Chinooks are crafty and intriguing, and have probably learned the arts of cheating, flattery, and dissimulation in the course of their traffic with the coasting traders: for, on our first arrival among them, we found guns, kettles, and various other articles of foreign manufacture in their possession, and they were up to all the shifts of bargaining. Nor are they less ingenious than inquisitive; the art they display in the making of canoes, of pagods, and of fishing-tackle, and other useful instruments, deserves commendation. They show much skill in carved work, which they finish with the most delicate polish.

The men are generally stout, muscular, and strong, but not tall, and have nothing ferocious in their countenances. Their dress invariably consists of a loose garment, made of the skin of the wood-rat, neatly sewed together and painted, which they wrap round the body like a blanket; nor does the hardy savage, though constantly rustling through the woods, ever wear shirt, leggings, or shoes. The chief's robe is made of sea-otter skin and other valuable furs. All classes wear the cheapool, or hat, which is made of a tough strong kind of grass, and is of so close a texture as to be water-proof. The crown is of a conic form, terminating generally in a point at the top, and the rim so very broad as to screen the shoulders from the rain. The cheapool is chequered or diversified with the rude figures of different animals, particularly the dog and deer, not painted, but ingeniously interwoven. Their war garments are of two kinds, one is termed clemal, of elk-skin, dressed and worked to the thickness of nearly half an inch, and arrow-proof. The clemal nearly covers the whole body, with an opening left on the right side to allow the arm free action in combat. The other is a kind of vest, made of small round sticks of the size and shape of arrows, twelve inches long: they are laid side to side, and then sewed together, and fixed on the body like a waistcoat. This is arrow-proof also. They carry a circular shield, about eighteen inches in diameter, which is likewise made of the elk-skin; but in addition to its thickness it is hardened by fire and painted, and is not only arrow-proof, but proof against the knife and the tomahawk also. Their implements of warfare are guns, bows and arrows, knife, bludgeon, and tomahawk, all of which they use with great dexterity. A Chinooke Indian armed *cap-à-pie* is a most unsightly and hideous being.

When not employed either in war or hunting, the men generally spend their time in gambling. The chief game, chal-e-chal, at which they stake their most valuable property, is played by six persons, with ten circular palettes of polished wood, in size and shape resembling dollars. A mat three feet broad and six feet long is spread on the ground, and the articles at stake laid at one end, then the parties seat themselves, three on each side of the mat, facing one another; this done, one of the players takes up the ten palettes, shuffling and shifting them in his hands, when at a signal given he separates them in his two fists, and throws them out on the mat towards his opponent, and according as the palettes roll, slide, or lie on the mat when thrown, the party wins or loses. This he does three times successively. In this manner each tries his skill in turn, till one of the parties wins. Whole days and nights are spent in this game without ceasing, and the Indians seldom grumble or repine even should they lose all that they possess. During the game the players keep chanting a loud and sonorous tune, accompanying the different gestures of the body just as the voyageurs keep time to the paddle.

Having noticed some of the characteristic manners and customs of the men, I shall now indulge the reader's curiosity with a few remarks on the habits and accomplishments of the fair sex. The women are generally of the middle size, but very stout and flabby, with short necks and shapeless limbs; yet they are well-featured, with something of a smile on the countenance, fair complexion, light hair, and prominent eyes. In addition to the rat-garment used by the men, the women wear a kind of fringed petticoat suspended from the waist down to the knees, made of the inner rind of the cedar bark, and twisted into threads, which hang loose like a weaver's thrums, and keep flapping and twisting about with every motion of the body, giving them a waddle or duck gait. This garment might deserve praise for its simplicity, or rather for its oddity, but it does not screen nature from the prying eye; yet it is remarkably convenient on many occasions. In a calm the sails lie close to the mast, metaphorically speaking, but when the wind blows the bare poles are seen.

Instead of the cedar petticoat, the women of some tribes prefer a breech cloth, similar to the pow of the Owhyhee females, and is nothing more than a piece of dressed deer-skin, six inches broad and four feet long, which, after passing between the thighs, is tied round the waist. Words can hardly express the disgusting unsightliness of this singular female dress. The women, when not employed in their domestic labour, are generally occupied in curing fish, collecting roots, and making mats and baskets; the latter, of various sizes and different shapes, are made of the roots of certain shrubs, which are flexible and strong, and they are capable of containing any liquid. In this branch of industry they excel among Indian tribes. The neatness and good taste displayed in the Chinooke baskets are peculiar to that article, which is eagerly sought after as a curiosity.

The women here are not generally subject to that drudgery common among most other Indian tribes. Slaves do all the laborious work; and a Chinooke matron is constantly attended by two, three, or more slaves, who are on all occasions obsequious to her will. In trade and barter the women are as actively employed as the men, and it is as common to see the wife, followed by a train of slaves, trading at the factory, as her husband. Slaves are the fruits of war and of trade among the tribes along the sea-coast far to the north, and are regularly bought and sold in the same manner as any other article of property; but I never knew a single instance of a Chinooke, or one of the neighbouring tribes, ever selling his wife, or daughter, or any other member of his family.

Chastity is not considered a virtue by the Chinooke women, and their amorous propensities know no bounds. All classes, from the highest to the lowest, indulge in coarse sensuality and shameless profligacy. Even the chief would boast of obtaining a paltry toy or trifle in return for the prostitution of his virgin daughter.

The females are excessively fond of singing and adorning their persons with the fantastic trinkets peculiar to savages; and on these occasions the slaves are generally rigged out the best, in order to attract attention and procure admirers. All classes marry very young; and every woman, whether free born or a slave, is purchased by her husband.

Children are suckled at the breast till their second or third year, and the mother, in consequence, becomes an old hag at the age of thirty-five.

The women have also their own amusements. Their chief game, called omintook, is played by two only, with four beaver teeth, curiously marked and numbered on one side, which they throw like dice. The two women being seated on the ground, face to face, like the men at chal-e-chal, one of them takes up the teeth, keeps shaking them in her hands for some time, then throws them down on the mat, counts the numbers uppermost, and repeating the sum thrice, hands the teeth over to the other party, who proceeds in like manner. The highest number wins. At this game, trinkets of various descriptions and value are staked. On a fine day, it is amusing to see a whole camp or village, both men and women, here and there in numerous little bands, gambling, jeering, and laughing at one another, while groups of children keep in constant motion, either in the water or practising the bow and arrow, and even the aged take a lively interest in what is passing, and there appears a degree of happiness among them, which civilized men, wearied with care and anxious pursuits, perhaps seldom enjoy.

These people live by hunting and fishing; but the greater part of their food is derived from the waters. The Columbia salmon, of which there are two species, are perhaps as fine as any in the world, and are caught in the utmost abundance during the summer season: so that, were a foreign market to present itself, the natives alone might furnish 1,000 tons annually. The largest caught in my time weighed forty-seven pounds. Sturgeon also are very abundant, and of uncommon size, yet tender and well flavoured, many of them weighing upwards of 700 pounds, and one caught and brought to us, measured 13 feet 9 inches in length, and weighed 1,130 pounds. There is a small fish resembling the smelt or herring, known by the name of ulichan, which enters the river in immense shoals, in the spring of the year. The ulichans are generally an article of trade with the distant tribes, as they are caught only at the entrance of large rivers. To prepare them for a distant market, they are laid side to side, head and tail alternately, and then a thread run through both extremities links them together, in which state they are dried, smoked, and sold by the fathom, hence they have obtained the name of fathom-fish. Roots and berries likewise form no inconsiderable portion of the native's food. Strawberries are ripe in January. The wapatoe, a perennial root, of the size, shape, and taste of the common potato, is a favourite article of food at all times of the year. This esculent is highly esteemed by the whites; many other roots and berries are to be had, all of which grow spontaneously in the low marshy ground. Fish, roots, and berries, can therefore be had in perfection, all along the coast, every month in the year. But not a fish of any kind is taken out of the ocean.

The circulating medium in use among these people is a small white shell called higua, about two inches long, of a convex form, and hollow in the heart, resembling in appearance the small end of a smoking pipe. The higua is thin, light, and durable, and may be found of all lengths, between three inches down to one-fourth of an inch, and increases or decreases in value according to the number required to make a fathom, by which measure they are invariably sold. Thirty to a fathom are held equal in value to three fathoms of forty, to four of fifty, and so on. So high are the higua prized, that I have seen six of 2½ inches long refused for a new gun. But of late, since the whites came among them, the beaver skin called enna, has been added to the currency; so that, by these two articles, which form the medium of trade, all property is valued, and all exchange fixed and determined. An Indian, in buying an article, invariably asks the question, Queentshich higua? or, Queentshich enna? That is, how many higua? or, how many beaver skins is it?

All Indians are more or less superstitious, and we need scarcely be surprised at that trait in their character, when even civilized men respect so many prejudices. Every great chief has one or more pagods or wooden deities in his house, to which, in all great councils of peace or war he presents the solemn pipe, and this is the only religious temple known among them.

They acknowledge a good and a bad spirit, the former named Econé, the latter Ecutoch. The Etaminuas, or priests, are supposed to possess a secret power of conversing with the Econé, and of destroying the influence of the Ecutoch: they are employed in all cases of sickness to intercede for the dying, that these may have a safe passage to the land of departed spirits. Besides the Etaminua, there is another class called Keelalles, or doctors, and it is usual for women, as well as men, to assume the character of a Keelalle, whose office it is to administer medicine and cure diseases. But the antic gestures, rude and absurd ceremonies gone through by them in visiting the sick, are equally useless and ridiculous, humming, howling, singing, and rattling of sticks, as if miracles were to be performed by mere noise; yet if we forget these useless gesticulations, which may be called the ornamental part, we must allow them to be a serviceable and skilful class of people. Their knowledge of roots and herbs enables them to meet the most difficult cases, and to perform cures, particularly in all external complaints.

The property of a deceased person is generally destroyed, and the near relations cut their hair, disfigure and lacerate their bodies; nor is this all, at the funeral ceremony strangers are here, as among some oriental nations, paid to join in the lamentation. All, excepting slaves, are laid in canoes or wooden sepulchres, and conveyed to some consecrated rock or thicket assigned for the dead; but slaves are otherwise disposed of; that is, if he or she dies in summer, the body is carelessly buried; but if in winter, a stone is tied about the neck, and the body thrown into the river, and none but slaves ever touch a slave after death.

When the salmon make their first appearance in the river, they are never allowed to be cut crosswise, nor boiled, but roasted; nor are they allowed to be sold without the heart being first taken out, nor to be kept over night; but must be all consumed or eaten the day they are taken out of the water; all these rules are observed for about ten days. These superstitious customs perplexed us at first not a little, because they absolutely refused to sell us any unless we complied with their notions, which of course we consented to do. All the natives along the coast navigate in canoes, and so expert are they that the stormiest weather or roughest water never prevents them from cruising on their favourite element. The Chinook and other war canoes are made like the Birman barge, out of a solid tree, and are from forty to fifty feet long, with a human face or a white-headed eagle, as large as life, carved on the prow, and raised high in front.

If we may judge from appearances, these people are subject to but few diseases. Consumption and the venereal disease are the complaints most common amongst them; from their knowledge in simples, they generally succeed in curing the latter even in its worst stages.

In winter they live in villages, but in summer rove about from place to place. Their houses are oblong, and built of broad, split cedar-planks, something in the European style, and covered with the bark of the same tree. They are sufficiently large and commodious to contain all the members of a numerous family, slaves included. At the top or ridge pole, an opening gives free passage to the smoke; they have one or more, according to the number of families in each. But I never saw more than four fires, or above eighty persons—slaves and all—in the largest house.

Towards the spring of the year, or as soon as the rainy season is over, all the Indians on the coast break up their winter quarters, and form large square sheds, for the purpose of drying and curing their fish, roots, and berries. Within this huge enclosure they then live in hordes, like so many cattle in a fold; but these sheds are only for temporary purposes; and it must have been on some such occasion that Meares found Wickananish in his "household of 800 persons." They migrate towards the interior sometimes for months together; war and traffic in slaves often call them to a distance; and this may account for the absence of inhabitants about Port Discovery and Desolation Sound when Vancouver was there. But another cause, and perhaps the best that can be assigned, for their abandoning their winter domiciles as soon as the warm weather sets in, is the immense swarms of fleas that breed in them during that season. You might as well encounter a bee-hive, as approach one of these deserted villages.

Among other fantastic usages, many of the tribes on the coast of the Pacific, and particularly those about Columbia, flatten the heads of their children. No sooner, therefore, is a child born, whether male or female, than its head is put into a press, or mould of boards, in order to flatten it. From the eyebrows, the head of a Chinook inclines backward to the crown; the back part inclining forward, but in a less degree. There is thus a ridge raised from ear to ear, giving the head the form of a wedge; and the more acute the angle, the greater the beauty. The flatness of the head is considered the distinguishing mark of being free born. All slaves are forbidden to bear this aristocratic distinction. Yet I have seen one or two instances to the contrary, where a favourite slave was permitted to flatten the head of a first-born child. No such custom is practised in any part of the interior. But all nations, civilized as well as savage, have their peculiar prejudices. The law of the land compels a South-Sea Islander to pull out a tooth; a northern Indian cuts a joint off his finger; national usage obliges a Chinese lady to deform her feet; an English lady, under the influence of fashion, compresses her waist; while a Chinook lady deforms her head. But Solomon hath said, "That which is crooked cannot be made straight."

As tracts suitable for agricultural purposes, may be mentioned several fertile and rich flats on the Columbia, although the country generally presents but a rocky, light, and sandy soil. On the south side, the river is joined, about eighty miles above Astoria, by the Wallamitte, a fine clear stream, 300 miles long, which, with its tributary rivulets, fertilizes one of the finest valleys west of the Rocky Mountains. The Wallamitte was always called by the whites, "the garden of the Columbia." For forty miles the river is navigable for boats of the largest size, to the falls, but there it is barred across by a ledge of rocks, over which the whole body of water descends —a height of 30 feet—in one smooth green sheet. The climate of this valley is salubrious and dry, differing materially from that of the sea-coast; and the heat is sufficiently intense to ripen every kind of grain in a short time.

Descending from the Wallamitte to Puget's Sound, north of the Columbia, where there is a large and convenient sea-port, or harbour, we find here a tract ranking next, perhaps, in an agricultural point of view. The plain is well watered by several fine rivers, and is far more extensive than the valley of the Wallamitte, nor is the soil much inferior; but there is a vast difference in the climate; rain falls near the coast almost incessantly from the beginning of November till April, and the country in other respects is gloomy and forbidding.

But, however inviting may be the soil, the remote distance and savage aspect of the boundless wilderness along the Pacific seem to defer the colonization of such a region to a period far beyond the present generation; and yet, if we consider the rapid progress of civilization in other new and equally remote countries, we might still indulge the hope of seeing this, at no distant time, one of the most flourishing countries on the globe.

The language spoken by these people is guttural, very difficult for a foreigner to learn, and equally hard to pronounce. To speak the Chinook dialect, you must be a Chinook.

## CHAPTER VII.

First expedition into the interior—Number of the party—Tongue Point—Canoe swamped—Sailing difficulties—Indian villages—Cedars—First night's encampment—Mount Coffin—Cowlitz—Wallamitte—Columbia Valley—Point Vancouver—Difficulties—The Cascades—Concourse of Indians—General appearance of the country—The portage—Description of the cascades—The roll of tobacco—Pilfering—Mr. Thompson—Exchange of men—The Long Narrows—Warlike appearance of the Indian cavalry—Button contract—Critical situation of the party—Camp of gamblers—The Narrows—Hard work at the carrying place—A day's work—Description of the portage—Number of Indians—Aspect of the country—The plains begin—End of the woods—Want of sleep—Demeanour of the Indians.

Notwithstanding the departure of the ship, and our reduced numbers, measures were taken for extending the trade; and the return of Mr. Thompson up the Columbia, on his way back to Canada, was considered as affording a favourable opportunity for us to fit out a small expedition, with the view of establishing a trading post in the interior: we were to proceed together, for the sake of mutual protection and safety, our party being too small to attempt anything of the kind by itself. Accordingly, Mr.

David Stuart, myself, Messrs. Pillette and M'Lennan, three Canadian voyageurs, and two Sandwich Islanders, accompanied by Mr. Thompson's party and the two strangers, in all twenty-one persons, started from Astoria, at eleven o'clock on the 22nd of July 1811.

In two clumsy Chinook canoes, laden each with fifteen or twenty packages of goods, of ninety dollars each, we embarked to ascend the strong and rapid Columbia; and, considering the unskilfulness of our party generally in the management of such fickle craft, the undertaking was extremely imprudent; but then, being all of us more or less ambitious, we overlooked, in the prospect of ultimate success, both difficulty and danger. After our canoes were laden, we moved down to the water's edge—one with a cloak on his arm, another with his umbrella, a third with pamphlets and newspapers for amusement, preparing, as we thought, for a trip of pleasure, or rather all anxious to be relieved from our present harassing and dangerous situation. The wind being fair and strong, we hoisted sail; but had not proceeded to Tongue Point, a small promontory in the river, not three miles distant from Astoria, when the unfriendly wind dashed our canoes, half-filled with water, on the shore; and, as we were not able to double the Point, we made a short passage across the isthmus, and then, being somewhat more sheltered from the wind, proceeded, but had not got many miles before our progress was again arrested by a still worse accident; for, while passing among the islands and shoals, before rounding Oathlamuck Point, at the head of Gray's Bay, the wind and swell drove us on a sandbank, where we stuck fast—the waves dashing over us, and the tide ebbing rapidly. Down came the mast, sail, and rigging about our ears; and, in the hurry and confusion, the canoes got almost full of water, and we were well drenched: here we had to carry the goods and drag the canoes till we reached deep water again, which was no easy task. This disaster occupied us about two hours, and gave us a foretaste of what we might expect during the remainder of the voyage. Cloaks and umbrellas, so gay in the morning, were now thrown aside for the more necessary paddle and carrying strap, and the pamphlets and newspapers went to the bottom. Having, however, got all put to rights again, we hoisted sail once more, passed Puget's Island, and then the great Whill Wetz village, situated on Oak Point, where the river makes a sudden bend to S.S.E.: here, on the south side, the rocks became high and the current strong, and night coming on us before we could reach low ground, we were compelled to encamp on the verge of a precipice, where we passed a gloomy night—drenched with wet, without fire, without supper, and without sleep. During this day's journey, both sides of the river presented a thick forest down to the water's edge—the timber being large, particularly the cedars. The sound, from Cape Disappointment to the head of Gray's Bay, which we passed to-day, is about twenty-five miles in length, and varies from four to seven in breadth.

On the 23rd, after a restless night, we started, stemming a strong and almost irresistible current by daylight. Crossing to the north side, not far from our encampment, we passed a small rocky height, called Coffin Rock, or Mount Coffin, a receptacle for the dead: all over this rock—top, sides, and bottom —were placed canoes of all sorts and sizes, containing relics of the dead, the congregated dust of many ages.

Not far from Mount Coffin, on the same side, was the mouth of a small river, called by the natives Cowlitz, near which was an isolated rock, covered also with canoes and dead bodies. This sepulchral rock has a ghastly appearance, in the middle of the stream, and we rowed by it in silence; then passing Deer's Island, we encamped at the mouth of the Wallamitte. The waters of the Columbia are exceedingly high this year—all the low banks and ordinary water-marks are overflowed, and the island inundated. At the mouth of the Wallamitte, commences the great Columbian valley of Lewis and Clarke; but in the present state of flood, surrounded on all sides by woods almost impervious, the prospect is not fascinating. The Indians appeared very numerous in several villages. General course the same as yesterday, S.E.

On the 24th, after a good night's rest, and having made some trifling presents to a principal chief, named Kiasno, we proceeded on our voyage; but had not gone far, when we passed another and larger branch of the Wallamitte—so that this river enters the Columbia by two channels, from the last of which the Columbia makes a gradual bend to the E.N.E.

During this day, we passed the Namowit Village, Bellevue Point, Johnson's Island, and stayed for the night at Wasough-ally Camp, near Quicksand River, which enters the Columbia on the left.

Bellevue Point on the right-hand side of the river, although but low, presents a scene of great beauty, compared to what we had yet seen during the voyage: here the eye is occasionally relieved from the monotonous gloomy aspect of dense woods, by the sight of green spots, clumps of trees, small lakes, and meadows alternately.

On the 25th, early this morning, we arrived at and passed Point Vancouver, so named after the celebrated navigator, and the extreme point of Broughton's survey of the Columbia. From the lower branch of the Wallamitte to Point Vancouver, the banks of the river on both sides are low; but, as we proceeded further on, a chain of huge black rocks rose perpendicularly from the water's edge: over their tops fell many bold rills of clear water. Hemmed in by these rocky heights, the current assumed double force, so that our paddles proved almost ineffectual; and, to get on, we were obliged to drag ourselves along from point to point, by laying hold of bushes and the branches of overhanging trees, which, although they impeded our progress in one way, aided us in another. After a day of severe toil, we halted for the night. We saw but five Indians all this day; and, for the first time, now came to our camp at night. The ebb and flow of the tide is not felt here. The country, generally, has a wild and savage appearance: course, E.N.E.

On the 26th, it was late this morning before we could muster courage to embark. The burning sun of yesterday, and the difficulty of stemming the rapid current, had so reduced our strength that we made but little headway to-day; and, after being for six hours rowing as many miles, we stopped, tired and rather discouraged: course, N.E.

On the 27th, we were again early at work, making the best of our way against a turbulent and still increasing current: as we advanced, the river became narrower, the hills and rocks approaching nearer and nearer to the river on either side. Here the view was very confined, and by no means cheering.

We, however, continued our toil till late in the evening, when, in place of a uniform smooth and strong current, as usual, the water became confused and ripply, with whirlpools and cross currents, indicating the proximity of some obstruction. At the foot of a rocky cliff, which we named Inshoach Castle, we put ashore for the night; nor did we see a single Indian all day. Mr. Thompson encamped on one side of the river, and we on the other. General course, to-day, nearly east.

During last night the water rose ten inches. This was supposed to be occasioned by the tide, although, after passing Bellevue Point, the influence of tide was not perceptible on the current. From the mouth of the river to this place—a distance of a hundred and eighty miles—there is sufficient depth of water for almost any craft to pass; even ships of 400 tons might reach Inshoach Castle had they power to stem the current.

As regards agricultural purposes, Bellevue Point and the valley of the Wallamitte were the most favourable spots we met with. Generally speaking, the whole country on either side of the river, as far as the eye could reach, presented a dense, gloomy forest. We found, however, a marked improvement in the climate. Here the air is dry and agreeable. Fogs, mists, damp and rainy weather, ceased after we had passed the Wallamitte.

On the 28th, early in the morning, Mr. Thompson crossed over to our camp, and informed us that we were within a short distance of the cascades. We then embarked, and proceeded together. After making some distance with the paddles, we had recourse to the poles, and then to the hauling line, till at length we reached the point of disembarkation.

We had no sooner landed, than a great concourse of Indians assembled at a short distance from us, and, after holding a consultation, came moving on in a body to meet us, or rather, as we thought, to welcome our arrival. The parley being ended, and the ceremony of smoking over, they pointed up the river, signifying that the road was open for us to pass. Embarking again, we pushed on, and passing the Strawberry Island of Lewis and Clarke, we continued for some distance further, and finally put on shore at the end of the portage, or carrying-place, situate on the right-hand side of the river, and at the foot of a rather steep bank. Here the Indians crowded about us in fearful numbers, and some of them became very troublesome. A small present being made to each of the chiefs, or great men, in order to smooth them down a little in our favour, they pointed across the portage, or carrying-place, as much as to say—All is clear; pass on.

From this point we examined the road over which we had to transport the goods, and found it to be 1450 yards long, with a deep descent, near the Indian villages, at the far end, with up-hills, down-hills, and side-hills, most of the way, besides a confusion of rocks, gullies, and thick woods, from end to end. To say that there is not a worse path under the sun would perhaps be going a step too far, but to say that, for difficulty and danger, few could equal it would be saying but the truth. Certainly nothing could be more discouraging than our present situation —obstacles on every side; by land, by water, and from the Indians—all hostile alike. Having landed the goods, and secured the canoe, we commenced the laborious task of carrying, and by dividing ourselves in the best possible manner for safety, we managed to get all safe over by sunset. Not being accustomed myself to carry, I had of course, as well as some others, to stand sentinel; but seeing the rest almost wearied to death, I took hold of a roll of tobacco, and after adjusting it on my shoulder, and holding it fast with one hand, I moved on to ascend the first bank; at the top of which, however, I stood breathless, and could proceed no farther. In this awkward plight, I met an Indian, and made signs to him to convey the tobacco across, and that I would give him all the buttons on my coat; but he shook his head, and refused. Thinking the fellow did not understand me, I threw the tobacco down, and pointing to the buttons one by one, at last he consented, and off he set at a full trot, and I after him; but just as we had reached his camp at the other end, he pitched it down a precipice of two hundred feet in height, and left me to recover it the best way I could. Off I started after my tobacco; and if I was out of breath after getting up the first bank, I was ten times more so now. During my scrambling among the rocks to recover my tobacco, not only the wag that played me the trick, but fifty others, indulged in a hearty laugh at my expense; but the best of it was, the fellow came for his payment, and wished to get not only the buttons but the coat along with them. I was for giving him—what he richly deserved—buttons of another mould; but peace, in our present situation, was deemed the better policy: so the rogue got the buttons, and we saw him no more.

Before leaving this noted place, the first barrier of the Columbia, we may remark that the whole length of the cascade, from one end to the other, is two miles and a half. We were now encamped at the head or upper end of them, where the whole river is obstructed to the breadth of one hundred or one hundred and twenty feet, and descends in high and swelling surges with great fury for about one hundred yards. Then the channel widens and the river expands, and is here and there afterwards obstructed with rocks, whirlpools, and eddies throughout, rendering the navigation more or less dangerous; but there are no falls in any part of it, either at high or low water, and with the exception of the first shoot, at the head of the cascade, where the water rushes with great impetuosity down its channel, they are, with care and good management, passable at all seasons for large craft, that is boats.

All the Indians we saw about this place were in three small camps or villages, and might number two hundred and fifty or three hundred at most. They call themselves Cath-le-yach-ĕ-yachs, and we could scarcely purchase from the lazy rascals fish and roots enough for our supper. In dress, appearance, and habits they differed but little from those about Astoria; but they spoke a different language, although many of them understood and spoke Chinook also.

At first we formed a favourable opinion of them; but their conduct soon changed, for we had no sooner commenced transporting our goods than they tried to annoy us in every kind of way—to break our canoes, pilfer our property, and even to threaten ourselves, by throwing stones and pointing their arrows at us. We were not, however, in a situation to hazard a quarrel with them, unless in the utmost extremity; and it was certainly with great difficulty, and by forbearance on our part, that we got so well off as we did. After finishing the labour of the day, we arranged ourselves for the night. The Indians all assembled again about our little camp, and became very insolent and importunate; they looked at everything, and coveted all they saw. Indeed we were afraid at one time that we would have to appeal to arms; but fortunately, after distributing a few trifling presents among the principal men, they smoked and left us; but we kept a constant watch all night. The only domestic animal we saw among them was the dog.

On the 29th, early in the morning, we prepared to leave the cascades; but the bank being steep, and the current very strong where we had to embark, we did not venture off before broad daylight, and before that time the Indians had crowded about us as usual. Their pilfering propensities had no bounds. The more we gave them the more they expected, and of course the more trouble they gave us; and notwithstanding all our care and kindness to them, they stole our canoe axe and a whole suit of clothes, excepting the hat, belonging to Mr. M'Lennan, which we were unable to recover. We had no sooner embarked, however, than Mr. M'Lennan in his usual good-humour, standing up in the canoe, and throwing the hat amongst them, said, "Gentlemen, there's the hat, you have got the rest, the suit is now complete," and we pushed off and left them.

Immediately above the cascade the river resumes its usual breadth, with a smooth and strong current. The day being exceedingly warm, we made but little headway. In the evening we passed a small river on our left, near which we encamped for the night. Here we had promised ourselves a quiet night and sound sleep; but the Indians finding us out partly deprived us of both, as we had to keep watch. They were but few, however, and therefore peaceable. Course this day, N.N.E.

On the 30th we set off early, leaving the five Indians, who slept in our camp last night, sitting by the fire, enjoying a pipe of tobacco. As we proceeded, the country became more bold, rough, and mountainous; but still covered with thick woods and heavy timber. The day being very hot, we encamped early on a very pleasant and thickly-wooded island—course, N.E.

On the 31st, after breakfast, Mr. Thompson and party left us to prosecute their journey, and Mr. Stuart, in one of our canoes, accompanied him as far as the long narrows, nor did he return till late in the afternoon, and then thinking it too late to start, we passed the remainder of the day in camp, enjoying the repose which we had so much need of. The two strangers remained with us.

On Mr. Thompson's departure, Mr. Stuart gave him one of our Sandwich Islanders, a bold and trustworthy fellow, named Cox, for one of his men, a Canadian, called Boulard. Boulard had the advantage of being long in the Indian country, and had picked up a few words of the language on his way down. Cox, again, was looked upon by Mr. Thompson as a prodigy of wit and humour, so that those respectively acceptable qualities led to the exchange.

On the 1st of August we left our encampment at daylight, but a strong head-wind impeded our progress, and not being able to get on, we put ashore, and encamped at a much earlier hour than we wished. Course, N.E.

On the 2d, at three o'clock in the afternoon, we reached Sandy Bay, at the foot of the narrows. The Indians, being apprised of our coming, had assembled, as might be expected, in great numbers, and presented to us quite a new sight, being all armed *cap-à-pie*, painted, and mounted on horseback. To us in our present situation they were rather objects of terror than of attraction, but we had to put the best face we could on things, so we landed our goods and invited them to smoke with us.

We had not hitherto settled upon any plan, whether to continue our route by water up the long narrows, or undertake the portage by land, both appearing equally difficult and equally dangerous: at last we adopted the latter plan, because it was recommended by the Indians, in whose power we were either way. The plan being now settled, we bargained with the chiefs for the carriage of the goods—ten metal buttons for each piece was the price stipulated, which reduced our stock by exactly two and a half gross: and in less than ten minutes after the whole cavalcade, goods and all, disappeared, leaving us standing in suspense and amazement. While we were in this painful state of anxiety, one man and an Indian were left to guard the canoes, whilst the rest of us, carrying what we could on our backs, followed the Indians on foot to the other end of the portage, where we arrived at sunset, and found, to our great satisfaction, all the property laid together in safety, and guarded by the chiefs. Having paid the Indians what we promised, and a small recompense to the different chiefs, we arranged our little camp for the night, the chiefs promising us their protection. All the Indians now flocked around us, men, women, and children, and spent the whole night in smoking, dancing, and singing, while we kept watch in the centre of the ominous circle. During the night, however, notwithstanding the chief's guarantee of protection, we perceived some suspicious movements, which gave us considerable alarm. We had recourse again and again to the chiefs, who at last admitted that there was some indication of danger; but added that they were still our friends, and would do their utmost to protect us. Just at this moment, as we were consulting with the chiefs, several harangues were made in the camp, the smoking ceased, and the women and children were beginning to move off. It was a critical moment; we saw the cloud gathering, but could not dispel it; our fate seemed to hang upon a hair. At last we hit upon a stratagem; we persuaded the chiefs to come and stop within our little circle for the night, which they did, and from that position they harangued in turn, which had a good effect, and in this manner we passed the night, not forgetting every now and then to give the chiefs some little toy or trifle, to stimulate their exertions in our favour.

Early in the morning of the 3rd, four of us returned to the other end of the portage, and by two o'clock got one of the canoes safe across. Returning again immediately, we arrived with the other a little after dark; one man still remaining across, taking care of the canoe-tackling and camp utensils. The Indians all the day kept dancing and smoking, and it was our interest to keep them so employed as much as possible; and no one knew better how to do so than Mr. Stuart, his eye saw everything at a glance, and his mild and insinuating manners won their affections.

As night came on, the Indians were to be seen divided in groups, as if in consultation; but there appeared no sign of unanimity among them; each chief seemed occupied with his own little band, and we learned that they were not all one people, with one interest, or under one control, and this divided state no doubt added greatly to our safety; for wherever we found one chief alone, he invariably pointed to the others as bad men, calling them sho-sho-nez, or inlanders. Not knowing, however, who were our friends or who our foes, we had to keep a strict watch all night.

At daybreak on the 4th, three of our men crossed the portage for the remainder of the goods, and arrived safely at an early hour, but had enough to do to save their kettles from some scamps they met with on the way.

The length of this dry and sandy portage is nine miles; and when it is taken into consideration that we had to go and come all that distance four times in one day, without a drop of water to refresh ourselves, loaded as we were, and under a burning sun, it will be admitted that it was no ordinary task. Under any other circumstances but a struggle between life and death, it could never be performed; but it was too much; the effort was almost beyond human strength, and I may venture to say, all circumstances considered, it will never be done again.

The main camp of the Indians is situated at the head of the narrows, and may contain, during the salmon season, 3,000 souls, or more; but the constant inhabitants of the place do not exceed 100 persons, and are called Wy-am-pams; the rest are all foreigners from different tribes throughout the country, who resort hither, not for the purpose of catching salmon, but chiefly for gambling and speculation; for trade and traffic, not in fish, but in other articles; for the Indians of the plains seldom eat fish, and those of the sea-coast sell, but never buy fish. Fish is their own staple commodity. The articles of traffic brought to this place by the Indians of the interior are generally horses, buffalo-robes, and native tobacco, which they exchange with the natives of the sea-coast and other tribes, for the higua beads and other trinkets. But the natives of the coast seldom come up thus far. Now all these articles generally change hands through gambling, which alone draws so many vagabonds together at this place; because they are always sure to live well here, whereas no other place on the Columbia could support so many people together. The long narrows, therefore, is the great emporium or mart of the Columbia, and the general theatre of gambling and roguery.

We saw great quantities of fish everywhere; but what were they among so many: we could scarcely get a score of salmon to buy. For every fisherman there are fifty idlers, and all the fish caught are generally devoured on the spot; so that the natives of the place can seldom lay up their winter stock until the gambling season is over, and their troublesome visitors gone. All the gamblers, horse-stealers, and other outcasts throughout the country, for hundreds of miles round, make this place their great rendezvous during summer.

The narrows by water are not a great deal longer than the portage by land. At the upper end, during low water, a broad and flat ledge of rocks bars the whole river across, leaving only a small opening or portal, not exceeding forty feet, on the left side, through which the whole body of water must pass. Through this gap it rushes with great impetuosity; the foaming surges dash through the rocks with terrific violence; no craft, either large or small, can venture there in safety. During floods, this obstruction, or ledge of rocks, is covered with water, yet the passage of the narrows is not thereby improved. Immediately above the rocks, the river resembles a small still lake, with scarcely any current.

The general aspect of the country around the long narrows cannot be called agreeable; the place is lone, gloomy, and the surface rugged, barren, and rocky; yet it is cheering in comparison with the dense forests which darken the banks of the river to this place. At the foot of the narrows the whole face of nature is changed, like night into day. There the woody country ceases on both sides of the river at once, and abruptly; the open and barren plains begin. The contrast is sudden, striking, and remarkable. Distance from the cascades to this place seventy miles.

The great bend or elbow of the Columbia is formed by the long narrows: here, on the west side, terminates that long, high, and irregular chain of mountains which lie parallel to the coast, dividing the waters which flow into the Pacific on the west, from those running into the Columbia on the east. This range abounds in beaver and elk, and is often frequented by the industrious hunter. At the Indian tents we saw several small packages of beaver, but we purchased none, our canoes being too small; and, besides, they will always find their way to Astoria. We have all along, however, impressed on the natives the object of our visit to their country, and the value of beaver.

The Indians have been more troublesome, more importunate and forward to-day than at any time since our arrival among them. They often expressed a wish to see what we had in our bales and boxes. The chiefs also gave us to understand that their good offices merited a reward, and they could not comprehend why people who had so much as we were not more liberal. We endeavoured to satisfy their demands, and towards evening the chiefs were invited to sleep in our camp; but for us there was no sleep: there is no rest for the wicked.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Columbia Falls—A canoe swamped—Suspicious behaviour of the Indians—Stratagem—Umatallow—Walla-Walla—Great body of Indians—Harangues—Indian ceremonies—The great forks—Difference in the waters—Length of the forks—The British flag—Mr. Thompson's design—Indian ideas—Salmon—European articles—Tummatapam—Departure from the Forks—Indian honesty—Eyakema—Marl-hills—Dead children—Superstitions—Priest's Rapid—Rattlesnakes—Appearance of the country—Kewaugh-chen—Perilous situation of a canoe—The two sisters—The old Indian—Hunting party—Horses—The priest—Piss-cows—Sopa—Great assemblage of Indians—The comet—Oakinacken—Distance from Astoria—Indian council—Resolve to winter—Some account of the place—The stolen watch—The priest dismissed—Voyage concluded—The two strangers—First building—Division of the party—Lonely winter—The lost party—Indian trade—Mr. Stuart's adventures.

On the 5th of August, early in the morning, after making the chiefs a few presents, we proceeded, and had the singular good luck to get off with the loss of only one paddle. As we left the beach, the sullen savages crowded to the water's edge, and in silence stood and gazed at us, as if reproaching themselves for their forbearance. As we proceeded, the banks of the river were literally lined with Indians. Having ascended about seven miles, we arrived at the falls—the great Columbia Falls, as they are generally called; but, from the high floods this year, they were scarcely perceptible, and we passed them without ever getting out of our canoes. In seasons of low water, however, the break or fall is about twenty feet high, and runs across the whole breadth of the river, in an oblique direction. The face of the country about this place is bare, rugged, and rocky, and, to our annoyance, every point was swarming with Indians, all as anxious to get to us as we were to avoid them. Our exertions, and the want of sleep for the last three nights in succession, almost stupified us, and we were the more anxious to find some quiet resting-place for the night. We halted a short distance above the falls, and there encamped. The current was strong, and rapid the whole of this day. Course, north.

On the 6th, after passing a comfortless and almost sleepless night, owing to the crowd of Indians that had collected about us, we were on the water again before sunrise, stemming a strong and rapid current. About a mile from our last encampment, and opposite to a rocky island, the river Lowhum enters the Columbia on the east side. Its breadth is considerable, but the depth of water at its mouth is scarcely sufficient to float an Indian canoe, and over the rocky bottom it made a noise like thunder. Proceeding from this place, we observed, a short distance ahead, a very large camp of Indians, and in order to avoid them we crossed over towards the left shore; but found the current so powerful, that we had to lay our paddles aside and take to the lines. In this rather dangerous operation, we had frequently to scramble up among the rocks. Soon after, a few Indians volunteered their services to help us, and we found them very useful; but one of them, while conducting the line round a rock, endeavoured to cut it with a stone; he was detected, however, in the act, and just in time to prevent accident. Had the villain succeeded, not only the goods, but in all likelihood some lives would have been lost. The wind springing up, we hoisted sail; but found the experiment dangerous, owing to the rapidity of the current. We encamped at a late hour without seeing a single Indian. Course as yesterday.

On the 7th, early in the morning, we passed the river Day—not broad, but pretty deep, and distant about thirty miles from the river Lowhum. In all directions, the face of the country is one wide and boundless plain, with here and there some trifling inequalities, but not a tree nor bush to be seen. General course as yesterday.

On the 8th, after a quiet and comfortable night's rest, we embarked early; and hoisting sail with a fair wind, we scudded along at a good rate till two o'clock in the afternoon, when, all of a sudden, a squall overtook us and broke the mast of one of our canoes, which, in the hurry and confusion of the moment, filled with water, so that we had great difficulty in getting safe to shore.

The day being fine, we set about drying our things, and for that purpose began to spread them out, for every article had got thoroughly soaked; but this task we had no sooner commenced than the Indians flocked about us in great numbers. We therefore soon perceived the impropriety and danger of exhibiting so great a temptation before their eyes. In a few minutes we were almost surrounded by bows and arrows, one volley of which might have extinguished the expedition for ever; and one of the fellows had the audacity to shoot an arrow into one of our bales, as a warning of what might follow. In short, we thought we could read in the savage expression of their countenances some dark design; we therefore immediately commenced loading. Wet and dry were bundled together, and put into the canoes; and in order to amuse for a moment, and attract the attention of the crowd, I laid hold of an axe, and set it up at the distance of eighty yards, then taking up my rifle, drove a ball through it. This manœuvre had the desired effect. While the Indians stood gazing with amazement at the hole in the axe, our people were not idle. We embarked and got off without a word on either side. Having reached a small, snug island near the Suppa river, we put ashore for the night. Course as yesterday.

The 9th, we remained all day encamped drying the goods, and were visited only by the Indians in one canoe, who sold us a fine salmon.

On the 10th, at an early hour, we proceeded on our voyage, and met with no obstacle till the evening, when we arrived at the foot of a long and strong rapid, where we encamped near the mouth of a considerable river called Umatallow, which enters the Columbia here. This river takes its rise in a long range of blue mountains, which runs nearly east and west, and forms the northern boundary of the great Snake nation. Opposite to our encampment, on the west side, is situated a large mound or hill of considerable height, which, from its lonely situation and peculiar form, we called Dumbarton Castle. During this day we saw many Indians, all occupied in catching salmon. Course as usual.

On the 11th we commenced ascending the rapid—a task which required all our skill and strength to accomplish; and paddles, poles, hauling lines, and carrying-straps were in requisition in turn, and yet half the day was consumed ere we got to the top. At the foot of this rapid, which is a mile in length, the river makes a quick bend to the east for about two miles, then comes gradually round again to the north from the head of the rapid. The channel of the river is studded on both sides with gloomy black rocks arranged like colonnades, for upwards of twenty miles. Here are some sandy islands also, on one of which we encamped; and a dark and cheerless encampment it was, surrounded and shaded by these gloomy heights.

On the 12th we left our camp early, and in a short time came to the colonnade rocks, which suddenly terminated in two huge bluffs, one on each side of the river, exactly opposite to each other, like monumental columns. The river between these bluffs lies right south and north. The banks of the river then become low with sand and gravel, and the plains open full to view again, particularly on the east side.

Close under the right bluff issues the meandering Walla-Walla, a beautiful little river, lined with weeping willows. It takes its rise in the blue mountains already noticed. At the mouth of the Walla-Walla a large band of Indians were encamped, who expressed a wish that we should pass the day with them. We encamped accordingly; yet for some time not an Indian came near us, and those who had invited us to pass the day with them seemed to have gone away; so that we were at a loss what construction to put upon their shyness. But in the midst of our perplexity we perceived a great body of men issuing from the camp, all armed and painted, and preceded by three chiefs. The whole array came moving on in solemn and regular order till within twenty yards of our tent. Here the three chiefs harangued us, each in his turn; all the rest giving, every now and then, a vociferous shout of approbation when the speaker happened to utter some emphatical expression. The purport of these harangues was friendly, and as soon as the chiefs had finished they all sat down on the grass in a large circle, when the great calumet of peace was produced, and the smoking began. Soon after the women, decked in their best attire, and painted, arrived, when the dancing and singing commenced—the usual symbols of peace and friendship; and in this pleasing and harmonious mood they passed the whole day.

The men were generally tall, raw-boned, and well dressed; having all buffalo-robes, deer-skin leggings, very white, and most of them garnished with porcupine quills. Their shoes were also trimmed and painted red;—altogether, their appearance indicated wealth. Their voices were strong and masculine, and their language differed from any we had heard before. The women wore garments of well dressed deer-skin down to their heels; many of them richly garnished with beads, higuas, and other trinkets—leggings and shoes similar to those of the men. Their faces were painted red. On the whole, they differed widely in appearance from the piscatory tribes we had seen along the river. The tribes assembled on the present occasion were the Walla-Wallas, the Shaw Haptens, and the Cajouses; forming altogether about fifteen hundred souls. The Shaw Haptens and Cajouses, with part of the Walla-Wallas, were armed with guns, and the others with bows and arrows. The names of the principal chiefs were (in the order of the tribes) Tummatapam, Quill-Quills-Tuck-a-Pesten, and Allowcatt. The plains were literally covered with horses, of which there could not have been less than four thousand in sight of the camp.

On the 13th, we prepared to be off as early as possible; but Tummatapam would not let us go till we had breakfasted on some fine fresh salmon. He told us he would be at the forks before us. We then embarked, and continued our voyage. The banks on both sides of the river, above the Walla-Walla, are low, and the country agreeable. After passing three islands, we arrived at the forks late in the evening, and there encamped for the night. The crowd of Indians assembled at that place was immense, and among the rest was our friend Tummatapam. The Indians smoked, danced, and chanted all night, as usual, while we kept watch in turn.

On the 14th, early in the morning, what did we see waving triumphantly in the air, at the confluence of the two great branches, but a British flag, hoisted in the middle of the Indian camp, placed there by Mr. Thompson as he passed, with a written paper, laying claim to the country north of the forks, as British territory. This edict interdicted the subjects of other states from trading north of that station; and the Indians at first seemed to hint that we could not proceed up the north branch, and were rather disposed to prevent us, by saying, that Koo-Koo-Sint—meaning Mr. Thompson—had told them so, pointing at the same time to the south branch, as if to intimate that we might trade there. The chiefs likewise stated that Koo-Koo-Sint had given them such and such things, and among others the British flag, that they should see his commands respected; but that if Mr. Stuart would give them more than Koo-Koo-Sint had done, then he would be the greater chief, and might go where he pleased.

The opposition of the Indians on the present occasion suggested to our minds two things; first, that Mr. Thompson's motive for leaving us at the time he did was to turn the natives against us as he went along, with the view of preventing us from getting further to the north, where the North-West Company had posts of their own; and, secondly, that the tribes about the forks would prefer our going up the south branch, because then we would be in the midst of themselves. But it was our interest then to defeat these schemes, and so completely did we upset Mr. Thompson's plans, that I verily believe had he to pass there again, he would have some difficulty in effecting his purpose. Mr. Thompson's conduct reminds us of the husbandman and the snake in the fable. That he who had been received so kindly, treated so generously, and furnished so liberally by us, should have attempted to incite the Indians against us, in our helpless and almost forlorn state, was conduct which the world must condemn.

At the junction of the two great branches of the Columbia, the country around is open and very pleasant, and seems to be a great resort, or general rendezvous, for the Indians on all important occasions. The south-east branch is known by the name of Lewis's River, the north by that of Clarke's, in honour of the first adventurers. They are both large rivers, but the north branch is considerably the larger of the two. At the junction of their waters, Lewis's River has a muddy or milk-and-water appearance, and is warm; while Clarke's River is bluish, clear, and very cold. The difference of colour, like a dividing line between the two waters, continues for miles below their junction. These branches would seem, from a rough chart the Indians made us, to be of nearly equal length from the forks—perhaps 700 miles—widening from each other towards the mountains, where the distance between their sources may be 900 miles.

All the tributary rivers entering between this and the falls, a distance of 200 miles, are on the east side. The most important fishing place on the Columbia, after the long narrows, is here, or rather a little below this, towards the Umatallow. Yet although the salmon are very fine and large, weighing from fifteen to forty pounds each, they are not taken in the immense quantities which some other countries boast of. A Columbian fisherman considers it a good day's work to kill 100 salmon, whereas, at the Copper-Mine River, a fisherman will kill 1000 a day; and a Kamtschatkan, it is said, will kill, with the same means, 10,000 a day; but if these countries can boast of numbers, the Columbia can boast of a better quality and larger size.

The only European articles seen here with the Indians, and with which they seemed perfectly contented, were guns, and here and there a kettle, or a knife; and, indeed, the fewer the better. They require but little, and the more they get of our manufacture the more unhappy will they be, as the possession of one article naturally creates a desire for another, so that they are never satisfied.

In the afternoon the chiefs held a council, at which Mr. Stuart and myself were present. It was then finally settled that we might proceed up the north branch, and that at all times we might count upon their friendship. This being done, Tummatapam came to our tent, smoked a pipe, and took supper with us; and as he was going off, Mr. Stuart presented him with a suit of his own clothes, which highly pleased the great man. The Indians having retired, we set the watch for the night as usual.

Tummatapam is a middle-aged man, well featured, and of a very agreeable countenance; and what is still better, he is, to all appearance, a good man, was very kind to us, and rendered us considerable service; but the other two chiefs appeared to take precedence of him in all matters of importance.

On the 16th, we left the forks and proceeded up the north branch, which to the eye is as broad and deep here as below the forks. About twelve miles up, a small river entered on the west side, called Eyakema. The landscape at the mouth of the Eyakema surpassed in picturesque beauty anything we had yet seen. Here three Walla-Walla Indians overtook us on horseback, and to our agreeable surprise delivered us a bag of shot which we had left by mistake at our encampment of last night—a convincing proof that there is honesty among Indians; and if I recollect well, a similar circumstance, attesting the probity of the Walla-Wallas, occurred when Lewis and Clarke passed there in 1805. We saw but few Indians to-day, and in the evening we encamped without a night watch, for the first time since we left Astoria. General course, north.

On the 17th, we were paddling along at daylight. On putting on shore to breakfast, four Indians on horseback joined us. The moment they alighted, one set about hobbling their horses, another to gather small sticks, a third to make a fire, and the fourth to catch fish. For this purpose, the fisherman cut off a bit of his leathern shirt, about the size of a small bean; then pulling out two or three hairs from his horse's tail for a line, tied the bit of leather to one end of it, in place of a hook or fly. Thus prepared, he entered the river a little way, sat down on a stone, and began throwing the small fish, three or four inches long, on shore, just as fast as he pleased; and while he was thus employed, another picked them up and threw them towards the fire, while the third stuck them up round it in a circle, on small sticks; and they were no sooner up than roasted. The fellows then sitting down, swallowed them—heads, tails, bones, guts, fins, and all, in no time, just as one would swallow the yolk of an egg. Now all this was but the work of a few minutes; and before our man had his kettle ready for the fire, the Indians were already eating their breakfast.

When the fish had hold of the bit of wet leather, or bait, their teeth got entangled in it, so as to give time to jerk them on shore, which was to us a new mode of angling; fire produced by the friction of two bits of wood was also a novelty; but what surprised us most of all, was the regularity with which they proceeded, and the quickness of the whole process, which actually took them less time to perform, than it has taken me to note it down.

Soon after passing the Eyakema, a long range of marl hills interrupts the view on the east side of the river. Here two dead children were presented to us by their parents, in order that we might restore them to life again, and a horse was offered us as the reward. We pitied their ignorance, made them a small present, and told them to bury their dead. As we advanced along the marl hills, the river inclined gradually to the N.W. After a good day's work, we stopped for the night near a small camp of Indians, who were very friendly to us. Here and there were to be seen, on small eminences, burial-places. The dead are interred, and a few small sticks always point out the cemetery.

On the 18th, we reached the end of the marl hills. Just at this place the river makes a bend right south for about ten miles, when a high and rugged hill confines it on our left. Here the increasing rapidity of the current gave us intimation that we were not far from some obstruction ahead; and as we advanced a little under the brow of the hill, a strong and rocky rapid presented itself in the very bend of the river. Having ascended it about half way, we encamped for the night.

Here a large concourse of Indians met us, and after several friendly harangues, commenced the usual ceremony of smoking the pipe of peace: after which they passed the night in dancing and singing. The person who stood foremost in all these introductory ceremonies, was a tall, meagre, middle-aged Indian, who attached himself very closely to us from the first moment we saw him. He was called Ha-qui-laugh, which signifies doctor, or rather priest; and as this personage will be frequently mentioned in the sequel of our narrative, we have been thus particular in describing him. We named the place "Priest's Rapid," after him.

The name of the tribe is Ska-moy-num-acks; they appear numerous and well affected towards the whites. From the Priest's Rapid, in a direct line by land to the mouth of the Umatallow, the distance is very short, owing to the great bend of the river between the two places.

The Priest's Rapid is more than a mile in length, and is a dangerous and intricate part of the navigation. The south side, although full of rocks and small channels, through which the water rushes with great violence, is the best to ascend.

On the 19th, early in the morning, we started, but found the channel so frequently obstructed with rocks, whirlpools, and eddies, that we had much difficulty in making any headway. Crossing two small portages, we at length, however, reached the head of it, and there encamped for the night, after a very hard day's labour, under a burning sun. From the head of the Priest's Rapid, the river opens again due north.

The ground here is everywhere full, covered with flat stones, and wherever these stones lie, and indeed elsewhere, the rattlesnakes are very numerous. At times they may be heard hissing all around, so that we had to keep a sharp look-out to avoid treading on them; but the natives appeared to have no dread of them. As soon as one appears, the Indians fix its head to the ground with a small forked stick round the neck, then extracting the fang or poisonous part, they take the reptile into their hands, put it into their bosoms, play with it, and let it go again. When any one is bitten by them, the Indians tie a ligature above the wounded part, scarify it, and then apply a certain herb to the wound, which they say effectually cures it.

On the 20th we left the Priest's Rapid, and proceeded against a strong ripply current and some small rapids, for ten miles, when we reached two lofty and conspicuous bluffs, situate directly opposite to each other, like the piers of a gigantic gate, between which the river flowed smoothly. Here we staid for the night, on some rocks infested with innumerable rattlesnakes, which caused us not a little uneasiness during the night. From this place due east, the distance, in a direct line, to the marl hills left on the 18th is very short. At the southern angle of this flat is situated the Priest's Rapid, which we left this morning. Course, north.

Early on the 21st, we were again on the water. The country on the east side is one boundless rough and barren plain; but on the west, the rocks, after some distance, close in to the water's edge, steep and rugged, and the whole country behind is studded with towering heights and rocks, giving the whole face of the country, in that direction, a bleak, broken, and mountainous appearance. We saw but few natives to-day, but those few were very friendly to us. Towards evening we put ashore for the night, at a late hour. General course, north.

On the 22nd we left our camp early, and soon reached the foot of a very intricate and dangerous rapid, so full of rocks that at some little distance off the whole channel of the river, from side to side, seemed to be barred across, and the stream to be divided into narrow channels, whirlpools, and eddies, through which we had to pass. At the entrance of one of these channels, a whirlpool caught one of the canoes, and after whirling her round and round several times, threw her out of the channel altogether into a chain of cascades, down which she went, sometimes the stem, sometimes stern foremost. In this critical manner she descended to the foot of the rapids, and at last stuck fast upon a rock, when, after much trouble and danger, we succeeded in throwing lines to the men, and ultimately got all safe to shore. Here we encamped for the night, and spent the remainder of the day in drying the goods, mending the canoe, and examining the rapid.

On the 23rd we again commenced ascending, and found on the right-hand side a neck of land, where we made a portage: from thence we towed ourselves among the rocks, from one to another, until we reached the head of the rapid, and a most gloomy and dismal rapid it was. Both sides of the river at this place is rocky, and in no part of the Columbia is the view more confined. A death-like gloom seems to hang over the glen. This rapid, which is called Ke-waugh-tohen, after the tribe of Indians inhabiting the place, who call themselves Ke-waugh-tohen-emachs, is about thirty miles distant from the Priest's Rapid.

Having got clear of the rapid early in the day, we proceeded on a smooth current for some little distance, when the river makes a short bend nearly west. Here, on the south side, were observed two pillars on the top of an eminence, standing erect side by side, which we named the Two Sisters. They proved to be of limestone, and at a little distance very much resembled two human figures. From the Two Sisters, the river turns to the north again, where once more we had a sight of the open country. Nature, in these gloomy defiles just passed through, wears the dreary aspect of eternal winter. On the west, the hills are clothed with woods; but on the east side, the plains are bleak and barren. On a beautiful green spot, near a small Indian camp, we put ashore and passed the night. Here the priest, for the reader must know he had still followed us, introduced us to a friendly Indian, called Ma-chy-keu-etsa, or the Walking Bear. This gray-headed, little, old man made us comprehend that he had seen eighty-four winters or snows, as he expressed himself —he looked very old, but was still active, and walked well.

On the 24th we embarked early, and soon reached the mouth of Pisscow's river, a beautiful stream, which empties itself into the Columbia, through a low valley, skirted on each side by high hills. Its mouth, in the present high state of the water, is eighty yards broad. Here the Indians met us in great numbers, and vied with each other in acts of kindness. Sopa, the chief, made us a present of two horses, and others offered some for sale. We purchased four, giving for each one yard of print and two yards of red gartering, which was so highly prized by them that horses from all quarters were brought to us; but we declined buying any more, not knowing what to do with them. Our six horses were now delivered over in charge to the priest, who was to proceed with them by land.

The higher we ascend the river, the more friendly and well disposed are the aborigines towards us. Sopa invited us to pass the day with him, which we did, and were highly gratified to see the natives hunt the wild deer on horseback. They killed several head of game close to our camp, and we got a two-days' supply of venison from them. Sopa and his tribe kept smoking, dancing, and singing the whole night, and at every pause a loud and vociferous exclamation was uttered, denoting that they were happy now. The whites had visited their land, poverty and misery would no longer be known amongst them; we passed the night without keeping watch.

On the 25th we left Pisscows, and proceeded on our voyage, passing another small river, named Intyclook, and from thence to Oak Point, at the foot of a steep crag, where we passed the night.

Early in the morning of the 26th we left our encampment, but the stream becoming more and more rapid, we advanced but slowly, and towards evening had a good deal of pulling or hauling to ascend White-hill rapid, where the river, almost barred across by a ledge of low flat rocks, makes several quick bends. The west side is mountainous and gloomy to the water's edge. Encamping at the head of the rapid, we passed a quiet night, nor did a single Indian trouble us. Here we saw the ibex, the white musk goat, and several deer, and supped on a half devoured salmon, which a white-headed eagle had very opportunely taken out of the river. Course, north.

On the 27th we started early, and about ten o'clock passed a small but rapid stream, called by the natives Tsill-ane, which descended over the rocks in white broken sheets. The Indians told us it took its rise in a lake not far distant. From Tsill-ane, the hills on the west side receded, and the river became smooth. Meeting with some Indians, we put ashore, and the priest, with his horses, joining us soon after, we passed the night together. Here we got some salmon, roots, and berries from the Indians, which proved a very seasonable supply. The Indians were very friendly, communicative, and intelligent.

On the 28th, after despatching the priest with his charge, we left our camp and pursued our voyage against a strong current. The country on both sides was open, and the banks of the river low, yet many rapid places detained us long, and this detention was increased by a strong head-wind, which so fatigued us that we halted early. On our way to-day, we saw many deer and some beavers swimming about, but they were very shy.

On the 29th we reached the foot of a short but strong rapid, where the river abruptly veers round to east. Opposite to this rapid enters a tributary stream, which the Indians call Buttle-mule-emauch, or Salmon-fall River. It is less than the Pisscows, shallow, and full of stones, having its source near the foot of some lofty mountain not far distant. After making a discharge, we got over the rapid, and encamped for the night. Here the Indians assembled in friendly crowds, according to their usual habit—presented us with abundance of salmon, offered many horses for sale, and were in all other respects exceedingly kind. Here also they invited us to remain, to build, and to winter among them: they said their country abounded in beaver, nor should we want for provisions.

On the 30th, just as we were pushing off from the shore early in the morning, a large band of Indians, all mounted on horseback, arrived at our camp: we immediately put about to receive them, which was no sooner done than harangue after harangue, smoking, and speechifying commenced; and after one party, another arrived, so that we were absolutely obliged to remain the whole day where we were.

From the strangers we learned that there were whites before us, but a long way off. The Indians showed us a gun, tobacco, and some other articles, which they said had been purchased from the whites ahead, which confirmed the report. We therefore at once suspected that it must be a party of the North-Westerns; and here Mr. Stuart, for the first time, began to think of finding a suitable place to winter in.

On the 31st, we parted early from our friendly visitors, and shaping our course in an easterly direction along the bend of the river, we pushed on for about nine miles till we reached the mouth of a smooth stream called Oakinacken, which we ascended for about two miles, leaving the main Columbia for the first time, and then pitched our tents for the night. A great concourse of Indians followed us all day, and encamped with us. After acquainting them with the object of our visit to their country, they strongly urged us to settle among them. For some time, however, Mr. Stuart resisted their pressing solicitations, chiefly with the view of trying their sincerity; but, at last consenting, the chiefs immediately held a council, and then pledged themselves to be always our friends, to kill us plenty of beavers, to furnish us at all times with provisions, and to ensure our protection and safety.

During this afternoon we observed, for the first time, about 20° above the horizon, and almost due west, a very brilliant comet, with a tail about 10° long. The Indians at once said it was placed there by the Good Spirit—which they called Skom-malt-squisses—to announce to them the glad tidings of our arrival; and the omen impressed them with a reverential awe for us, implying that we had been sent to them by the Good Spirit, or Great Mother of Life.

On the 1st of September 1811, we embarked, and descending the Oakinacken again, landed on a level spot, within half a mile of its mouth. There we unloaded, took our canoes out of the water, and pitched our tents—which operation concluded our long and irksome voyage of forty-two days.

The mouth of the Oakinacken is situate 600 miles up the Columbia, and enters it through a low level plain, a mile wide. This plain is surrounded on all sides by high hills, so that in no direction does the view extend far.

The source of the Oakinacken is 280 miles due north, and in its course south the stream runs through three lakes: near its junction with the Columbia, it is hemmed in on the east by a sloping range of high rocky hills, at the foot of which the two rivers meet. On the south bank of the Oakinacken, half a mile from its mouth, was the site pitched upon for the new establishment.

The general aspect of the surrounding country is barren and dreary. On the west the hills are clothed with thick woods—a dense forest: on the south and east, the scene is bare; but to the north the banks of the river were lined with the willow and poplar, and the valley through which it meanders presents a pleasing landscape.

Here it may be remarked, that all the tributary rivers from this place to the falls, a distance of 200 miles, enter on the right-hand, or west, side of the Columbia, having their sources in the lofty range of mountains which terminates at the great narrows, as noticed by me on the 4th of August; so that from this point, or rather a few miles below this, the Columbia runs south to the narrows; nor is the distance from this place to the Pacific, in a direct line due west by land, far off. If we can rely on Indian report, it is not 150 miles.

Soon after the tent was pitched, the priest arrived with his horses all safe. In the course of the day, Mr. Stuart missed his time-piece, which had been stolen out of the tent: a general search was made, and the watch was found, by hearing it strike, although concealed under the dry sand in the face of the bank. The theft was traced to the holy man, the priest, which circumstance greatly lessened the high opinion we had formed of him. On this discovery being made, he was paid for his services and dismissed.

This little incident taught us that, however strong might be the friendly professions of the natives, it was still necessary to guard against their pilfering propensities.

In the account of our voyage, I have been silent as to the two strangers who cast up at Astoria, and accompanied us from thence; but have noticed already, that instead of being man and wife, as they at first gave us to understand, they were in fact both women—and bold adventurous amazons they were. In accompanying us, they sometimes shot ahead, and at other times loitered behind, as suited their plans. The stories they gave out among the unsuspecting and credulous natives, as they passed, were well calculated to astonish as well as to attract attention. Brought up, as they had been, near the whites—who rove, trap, and trade in the wilderness—they were capable of practising all the arts of well-instructed cheats; and, to effect their purpose the better, they showed the Indians an old letter, which they made a handle of, and told them that they had been sent by the great white chief, with a message to apprize the natives in general that gifts, consisting of goods and implements of all kinds, were forthwith to be poured in upon them; that the great white chief knew their wants, and was just about to supply them with everything their hearts could desire; that the whites had hitherto cheated the Indians, by selling goods in place of making presents to them, as directed by the great white chief. These stories, so agreeable to the Indian ear, were circulated far and wide; and not only received as truths, but procured so much celebrity for the two cheats, that they were the objects of attraction at every village and camp on the way: nor could we, for a long time, account for the cordial reception they met with from the natives, who loaded them for their good tidings with the most valuable articles they possessed—horses, robes, leather, and higuas; so that, on our arrival at Oakinacken, they had no less than twenty-six horses, many of them loaded with the fruits of their false reports.

As soon as we could get the distant tribes, who had come to welcome our arrival, dismissed, we commenced erecting a small dwelling-house, sixteen by twenty feet, chiefly constructed of drift wood, being more handy and easier got than standing timber; but, while the building was in a half-finished state, Messrs. Pillet and M'Lennan, with two men, were despatched to Astoria, as had been agreed upon. Mr. Stuart, with Montigny and the two remaining men, set off on a journey towards the north, or head waters of the Oakinacken, intending to return in the course of a month; while I was to remain alone at the establishment till Mr. Stuart's return; my only civilized companion being a little Spanish pet dog from Monterey, called Weasel.

Only picture to yourself, gentle reader, how I must have felt, alone in this unhallowed wilderness, without friend or white man within hundreds of miles of me, and surrounded by savages who had never seen a white man before. Every day seemed a week, every night a month. I pined, I languished, my head turned gray, and in a brief space ten years were added to my age. Yet man is born to endure, and my only consolation was in my Bible.

The first thing I did after my friends left me, was to patch up the house a little, and put the few goods I had, so tempting to Indians, into a kind of cellar which I made in the middle of the house. This done, I set to in earnest to learn the Indian language, and wrote vocabulary after vocabulary; and although the task was a hard one, I soon found, from my progress, that perseverance would overcome many difficulties.

The novelty of white men, and particularly of a white man alone, drew crowds of inquisitive Indians about the place. I mixed with them, traded with them, and at last began to talk with them, and from a constant intercourse soon came to understand them; but still the evenings were long, and the winter dreary. Every night before going to bed I primed my gun and pistol anew, and barricaded the door of my lonely dwelling; and the Indians, friendly inclined, always withdrew from the house at dusk; yet they had often alarms among themselves, and often gave me to understand that enemies, or ill-disposed Indians, were constantly lurking about; and whenever they began to whoop or yell in the night, which they frequently did, I of course partook of the alarm.

One night I was suddenly awakened out my sleep by the unusual noise and continual barking of Weasel, running backwards and forwards through the house. Half asleep, half awake, I felt greatly agitated and alarmed. My faithful gun and pistol were at hand, for they lay always at my side in bed; but then all was dark, I could see nothing, could hear nothing but the barking of Weasel, which was continually growing louder and louder. I then thought there must be somebody in the house; for I was ready to put the worst construction on appearances. In this perplexing dilemma I got my hand, with as little noise as possible, to the muzzle of my gun, and gradually drawing out the ramrod, tried, with my right arm stretched out, to stir up the embers, so that I might see; but here again a new danger presented itself; I was exposing myself as a mark to a ball or an arrow, without the chance of defending myself, for the light would show me to the enemy before I could see my object; but there was no alternative, and something must be done. Between hope and despair I managed to stir up the ashes, so that I could see little Weasel running to and fro to the cellar-door. I concluded that the enemy must be skulking in the cellar. I then, but not without difficulty, got a candle lighted. Holding the candle in my left hand, I laid hold of my pistol. With the lynx-eye and wary step of a cat ready to pounce on its prey, I advanced rather obliquely, with my right arm stretched out at full length holding the cocked pistol, till I got to the cellar-door, the little dog all the while making a furious noise; when, lo! what was there but a skunk sitting on a roll of tobacco! The shot blew it almost to atoms, and so delicately perfumed everything in the house that I was scarcely able to live in it for days afterwards; but that was not all, the trivial incident was productive of very bad consequences. Several hundreds of Indians being encamped about the place at the time, no sooner did they see the light, or hear the shot, than they all rushed into the house, thinking something serious had happened. So far, however, there were no great harm; but when they beheld two rolls of tobacco and two small bales of goods, it appeared such wealth in their eyes that they could scarcely recover from the surprise. These tempting articles I had endeavoured all along to keep as much as possible out of their sight, and dealt them out with a sparing hand, and as long as the Indians did not see them in bulk all went well; but after the overwhelming exhibition of so much property there was no satisfying them. They became importunate and troublesome for some time, and caused me much anxiety. The time fixed for Mr. Stuart's return had now arrived, and I most anxiously looked for him every hour. Often had I reason to curse the intrusion of the skunk into my house. After some time, however, things settled down again to their usual level, and good order and good feelings were again renewed between us.

October had now passed by and November also, but no Mr. Stuart came, and various reports were circulated by the Indians as to his fate; and I myself now began to despair of his return. The delay of Mr. Stuart's party had a visible effect on the conduct of the Indians; they became more bold, neglected their hunting, and loitered about the place, as if in expectation of some sudden change. Strange Indians were every day swelling the camp; they held councils, too; altogether, they were a changed people.

Seeing this unfavourable change fast spreading among the Indians, in consequence of Mr. Stuart's delay, I set about counteracting it. I assembled all the chiefs and other great men, and after smoking the pipe of friendship, told them not to be uneasy at Mr. Stuart's absence; that I could easily account for it; that finding the country rich in furs as he went along, and the Indians peaceable and well disposed, he had most probably gone off to the white men's land for more goods, and would be back early with a rich supply and many people, so that all their wants would be satisfied; that those who hunted best would get most; that they had better exert themselves in hunting and procuring furs; that their success would entitle them to the favour of Mr. Stuart and the great white chief; and that I would not fail to represent their conduct in the fairest light. This harangue had the desired effect. The Indians set to hunting in earnest, and kept bringing in furs regularly, and in other respects behaved exceedingly well during the whole of the winter.

Thus I wished to make them believe what I did not believe myself, because in my critical situation safety required it. But to return to Mr. Stuart: December now was passed, and the new year of 1812 ushered in; but still there was no account of the absent party. January passed, and likewise February, but no Mr. Stuart; nor was it till the 22nd of March that little Weasel announced, early in the morning, the approach of strangers, and I was rejoiced to meet again at my lonely dwelling my long-expected friends all safe and well.

During Mr. Stuart's absence of 188 days I had procured 1550 beavers, besides other peltries, worth in the Canton market 2,250*l.* sterling, and which on an average stood the concern in but 5½*d.* a piece, valuing the merchandize at sterling cost, or in round numbers 35*l.* sterling; a specimen of our trade among the Indians!

Here follows Mr. Stuart's account of his journey:

—"After leaving this place," said he, "we bent our course up the Oakinacken, due north, for upwards of 250 miles, till we reached its source; then crossing a height of land fell upon Thompson's River, or rather the south branch of Fraser's River, after travelling for some time amongst a powerful nation called the She Whaps. The snow fell while we were here in the mountains, and precluded our immediate return; and after waiting for fine weather the snows got so deep that we considered it hopeless to attempt getting back, and, therefore, passed our time with the She Whaps and other tribes in that quarter. The Indians were numerous and well disposed, and the country throughout abounds in beavers and all other kinds of fur; and I have made arrangements to establish a trading post there the ensuing winter. On the 26th of February we began our homeward journey, and spent just twenty-five days on our way back. The distance may be about 350 miles."

## CHAPTER IX.

Anxieties at Astoria—Indians depart—A schooner built—The *Dolly's* first trip—Criminal curiosity—The powder keg—The schooner condemned—Mr. Astor's cargoes—His policy—Remarks on the North-West coast—Unwelcome rumours—Calpo's statement—Rumours renewed—Hard cases—Joe Lapierre—Kasiascall's account of the *Tonquin*—Strange Indian—Kasiascall's conduct—His character—His design on Astoria—Remarks.

Having in the preceding chapters given a detailed account of our first expedition into the interior, we propose in the present briefly to notice the state of things at Astoria after our departure, and the fate of the *Tonquin*.

No sooner had we left the establishment in July last, than the natives became more and more hostile and annoying to the whites at Astoria, so that under the impression of danger, all other labour being suspended, the hands and minds of all were employed both day and night in the construction and pallisading of a stronghold for self-defence; but after various alarms the savage horde, without making any hostile demonstration more than usual, took their departure from the place, leaving the whites once more in the enjoyment of peace and tranquillity.

In the fall of the year, a schooner, of twenty-five tons, to be named the *Dolly*, the frame of which had come out in the *Tonquin*, was built at Astoria. This vessel was intended only for the coast trade; but in the present instance was placed as a guard-ship in front of the infant establishment. She was found, however, to be too small for the coast trade, and even unfit for tripping up and down the river; and from her unwieldiness, not so safe as either open boats or canoes. The people were also awkward and unskilful, as might be expected, having never been accustomed to such duties. In the very first trip up the river, she had well nigh fallen into the hands of the Indians: getting becalmed one day a little above the mouth of the Wallamitte, with only four men on board, curiosity drew a crowd of Indians about her, and once on board it was no easy matter to get them off again. Curiosity led to theft: every one began to help himself, and to take whatever he could lay his hands upon. The pillage was begun, when the interpreter boldly and opportunely called out that he was going instantly to set fire to a keg of powder, and would blow all up into the air, unless they left the ship that moment: the Indians got frightened; those who had c[illegible] jumped into them, made for shore with the hurry of despair; others jumped overboard, and in an instant the vessel was cleared of her troublesome visitors, and let go before the current. It will be recollected that Mr. Aikins, the officer who had come out to take command of the *Dolly*, was, with several others, unfortunately drowned on the bar. Having made two or three trips up the river, she was condemned, and laid aside altogether as useless.

It is a true saying, that the wisest of us is not always wise. In appointing so small a vessel as the *Dolly* to a station so dangerous, was manifested a total ignorance of the character of the natives on the coast. Mr. Astor ought to have known that even well appointed large and armed ships often ran great hazards there, some of that class having been taken and pillaged by the hostile savages of that quarter.

The American traders, with their usual spirit of enterprize, had long carried on a lucrative business on the north-west coast; they knew well, and none knew better than Astor himself, what was necessary and suitable for that market; but we had got nothing of this kind. Instead of guns, we got old metal pots and gridirons; instead of beads and trinkets, we got white cotton; and instead of blankets, molasses. In short, all the useless trash and unsaleable trumpery which had been accumulating in his shops and stores for half a century past, were swept together to fill his Columbia ships. That these cargoes were insured need not be told; sink or swim, his profits were sure.

But these we might have overlooked, had we not felt aggrieved in other matters closely connected with the general interest. The articles of agreement entered into, and the promises of promotion held out, when the company was formed, were violated, and that without a blush, by the very man at the head of the concern,—that man who held its destinies in his hand. This perhaps may be rendered a little more intelligible, by stating, that according to the articles of co-partnership made at New York, two of the clerks were to be promoted to an interest in the concern, or, in other words, to become partners, after two years' service, and on that express condition they joined the enterprize; but what will the reader say, or the world think, when it is told that a young man who had never seen the country was, by a dash of the pen, put over their heads, and this young man was no other than Mr. Astor's nephew. Although a little out of place, we shall just mention another circumstance which may shew how deeply and how sincerely Mr. Astor was interested in the success and prosperity of his Columbia colony. When the war broke out between Great Britain and the United States, the Boston merchants sent out, at a great expense, intelligence of the event to their shipping on the north-west coast, and applied to Astor for his quota of that expense, as he too had people and property there at stake. What was his reply? "Let the United States' flag protect them." Need it then be told that we were left to shift for ourselves. So much did Mr. Astor care about our safety.

But from this disagreeable subject we turn to another still more so, and that is the fate of the unfortunate *Tonquin*, which ship, it will be remembered, left Astoria in June last.

On the 5th of August, Calpo, a friendly Chinook Indian, informed M'Dougall that it was current among the Indians that the *Tonquin* had been destroyed by the natives along the coast, and this was the first tidings the Astorians had of her fate: the report had spread quickly and widely, although we remained ignorant of the fact; for not many days after we had arrived at Oakinacken, a party of Indians reached that place, on their return from the Great Salt Lake, as they called it, and gave us to understand by signs and gestures that a large ship, with white people in it, had been blown up on the water; and, in order the better to make us comprehend the subject, they threw up their arms in the air, blew with the mouth, and made the wild grimace of despair, to signify the explosion. On our part all was conjecture and suspense, unwilling as we were to believe what we did not wish to be true; but the more we reflected, the more we were disposed to believe the report, from the well-known fact that Mr. Astor's choice of a captain was most unfortunate: in this instance, he seemed to have wanted his usual sagacity; and this was the first rock on which his grand enterprize had split. A man who could deliberately leave, as we have already seen, nine of his fellow-creatures to perish on the Falkland Islands;

who could throw one of his sailors overboard, at the Island of Woahoo; who could offer the Indians at Owhyhee a reward for the head of one of his own officers; who could force from his ship four of his men in a storm, to perish at the mouth of the Columbia; who could witness unmoved, from his own deck, three of his men left to perish on Columbia bar; and, to cap the climax of cruelty, we might, however disagreeable, mention another circumstance. On the 11th of February 1811, while sailing on the high seas, a man named Joe Lapierre fell from the mainmast-head overboard, the ship at the time going eight knots—a boat was instantly lowered: in the mean time a hen-coop, binnacle, and some boards were thrown into the water, but he failed to get hold of anything, and soon fell a good mile or more astern. When picked up he was in a state of insensibility, and the crew made all possible haste to reach the ship; but, as they were approaching, the captain, in a peremptory tone, ordered them back to pick up the hen-coop, binnacle, and boards, before they came alongside, or put the man on board. The boat obeyed orders, went back again, picked up all, and returned to the ship at the end of fifty-two minutes—yet life was not quite extinct, for, after applying the usual remedies of salt, warm blankets, and friction, Lapierre revived.

But to return to the subject of Calpo's report—the conduct of Captain Thorn throughout, coupled with the fact of his having left Astoria without a single officer on board his ship, led strongly to the conclusion that all was not right, and that the reports in circulation might ultimately prove true. The facts above stated I myself witnessed—fifty others witnessed them also: they cannot be denied nor gainsaid—yet such was the man who enjoyed Mr. Astor's unbounded confidence.

Various and conflicting were the reports that had from time to time reached Astoria respecting the fate of the *Tonquin;* yet all agreed in the main point—that is, in her destruction. She had also passed, by some months, the time of her expected return, so that there remained but little doubt of her fate; yet, subsequently to Calpo's statement, nothing transpired to add to our fears for a month or two, although during that time various individuals and parties had been employed to trace out the true story of her fate.

On the 12th of October, however, three Chinooks were fitted out, and set off with the determination not to return until they should reach the place where it was reported she had been cut off, or obtain certain accounts respecting her. These men had not, however, proceeded far, before they were met by a strange Indian, on his way to Astoria with the unwelcome news of the *Tonquin's* tragical end: so the Chinooks turned about, and accompanied the stranger back to Astoria, where they arrived on the eighth day; and here the strange Indian made his report, which we shall give in his own words:—

"My name is Kasiascall, but the Chinooks and other Indians hereabout call me Lamazu. I belong to the Wick-a-nook tribe of Indians near Nootka Sound. I have often been on board ships. The whites call me Jack. I understand most of the languages that are spoken along the coast. I can speak some Chinook, too. I have been twice at this place before; once by land and once by sea. I saw the ship *Tonquin*; Captain Thorn was her commander. I went on board of her at Woody Point harbour in June lost. We remained there for two days. We then sailed for Vancouver's Island; and just as we had got to it, a gale of wind drove us to sea, and it was three days before we got back again. The fourth morning we cast anchor in Eyuck Whoola, Newcetu Bay. There we remained for some days; Indians going and coming, but not much trade. One day the Indians came on board in great numbers, but did not trade much, although they had plenty of skins. The prices offered did not please the Indians; so they carried back their furs again. The day following the chiefs came on board, and as usual asked the captain to show them such and such things, and state the lowest price, which he accordingly did. They did not, however, trade, but pressed the captain for presents, which he refused. The chiefs left the ship displeased at what they called stingy conduct in the captain, as they were accustomed to receive trifling presents from the traders on the coast.

"In the evening of the same day, Mr. M'Kay and myself went on shore, and were well received by the chiefs, and saw a great many sea-otter skins with the Indians. We both returned to the ship the same evening. Next day the Indians came off to trade in great numbers. On their coming alongside, the captain ordered the boarding-netting to be put up round the ship, and would not allow more than ten on board at a time; but just as the trade had commenced, an Indian was detected cutting the boarding-netting with a knife in order to get on board. On being detected, he instantly jumped into one of the canoes which were alongside, and made his escape. The captain then, turning round, bade the chiefs to call him back. The chiefs smiled and said nothing, which irritated the captain, and he immediately laid hold of two of the chiefs, and threatened to hang them up unless they caused the delinquent to be brought back to be punished. The moment the chiefs were seized, all the Indians fled from the ship in consternation. The chiefs were kept on board all night with a guard over them. Food was offered them, but they would neither eat nor drink. Next day, however, the offender was brought to the ship and delivered up, when the captain ordered him to be stripped and tied up, but did not flog him. He was then dismissed. The chiefs were also liberated, and left the ship, refusing with disdain a present that was offered them, and vowing vengeance on the whites for the insult received.

"Next day not an Indian came to the ship; but in the afternoon an old chief sent for Mr. M'Kay and myself to go to his lodge. We did so, and were very kindly treated. Mr. M'Kay was a great favourite among the Indians; and I have no doubt that the plot for destroying the ship was at this time fully arranged, and that it was intended, if possible, to save M'Kay's life in the general massacre. But not finding this practicable without the risk of discovery, he, as we shall soon learn, fell with the rest. When we were on shore we saw the chiefs, and they seemed all in good humour, and asked me if the captain was still angry; and on being assured that they would be well treated and kindly received by him if they went on board, they appeared highly pleased, and promised to go and trade the following day. Mr. M'Kay returned to the ship that evening, but I remained on shore till the next morning. When I got on board, Mr. M'Kay was walking backwards and forwards on deck in rather a gloomy mood, and considerably excited; himself and the captain having, as he told me, had some angry words between them respecting the two chiefs who had been kept prisoners on board, which was sorely against M'Kay's will.

"As soon as I got on deck, he called me to him. 'Well,' said he, 'are the Indians coming to trade to-day?' I said, 'They are.' 'I wish they would not come,' said he again; adding, 'I am afraid there is an under-current at work. After the captain's late conduct to the chiefs, I do not like so sudden, so flattering a change. There is treachery in the case, or they differ from all other Indians I ever knew. I have told the captain so—I have also suggested that all hands should be on the alert when the Indians are here; but he ridicules the suggestion as groundless. So let him have his own way.' M'Kay then asked me my opinion. I told him it would be well to have the netting up. He then bid me go to the captain, and I went; but before I could speak to him, he called out, 'Well, Kas, are the Indians coming to-day?' I said I thought so. He then asked—'Are the chiefs in good humour yet?' I said I never saw them in better humour. 'I humbled the fellows a little; they'll not be so saucy now; and we will get on much better,' said the captain. At this moment M'Kay joined us, and repeated to the captain what he had just stated to me. The captain laughed; observing to M'Kay, 'You pretend to know a great deal about the Indian character: you know nothing at all.' And so the conversation dropt.

"Mr. M'Kay's anxiety and perturbation of mind was increased by the manner in which the captain treated his advice; and having, to all appearance, a presentiment of what was brooding among the Indians, he refused going to breakfast that morning, put two pair of pistols in his pockets, and sat down on the larboard side of the quarter-deck in a pensive mood. In a short time afterwards, the Indians began to flock about the ship, both men and women, in great crowds, with their furs; and certainly I myself thought that there was not the least danger, particularly as the women accompanied the men to trade; but I was surprised that the captain did not put the netting up. It was the first time I ever saw a ship trade there without adopting that precaution. As soon as the Indians arrived, the captain, relying no doubt on the apparent reconciliation which had taken place between M'Kay and the chiefs on shore, and wishing perhaps to atone for the insult he had offered the latter, flew from one extreme to the other, receiving them with open arms, and admitting them on board without reserve, and without the usual precautions. The trade went on briskly, and at the captain's own prices. The Indians throwing the goods received into the canoes, which were alongside, with the women in them; but in doing so, they managed to conceal their knives about their persons, which circumstance was noticed by one of the men aloft, then by myself, and we warned the captain of it; but he treated the suggestions, as usual, with a smile of contempt, and no more was said about it; but in a moment or two afterwards, the captain began to suspect something himself, and was in the act of calling Mr. M'Kay to him, when the Indians in an instant raised the hideous yell of death, which echoed from stem to stern of the devoted ship, the women in the canoes immediately pushed off, and the massacre began. The conflict was bloody but short. The savages, with their naked knives and horrid yells, rushed on the unsuspecting and defenceless whites, who were dispersed all over the ship, and in five minutes' time the vessel was their own. M'Kay was the first man who fell, he shot one Indian, but was instantly killed and thrown overboard, and so sudden was the surprise that the captain had scarcely time to draw from his pocket a clasp-knife, with which he defended himself desperately, killed two, and wounded several more, till at last he fell dead in the crowd. The last man I saw alive was Stephen Weeks, the armourer. In the midst of the carnage, I leapt overboard, as did several other Indians, and we were taken up by the women in the canoes, who were yelling, whooping, and crying like so many fiends about the ship; but before I had got two gun-shots from the ship, and not ten minutes after I had left her, she blew up in the air with a fearful explosion, filling the whole place with broken fragments and mutilated bodies. The sight was terrific and overwhelming. Weeks must have been the man who blew up the ship, and by that awful act of revenge, one hundred and seventy-five Indians perished, and some of the canoes, although at a great distance off, had a narrow escape. The melancholy and fatal catastrophe spread desolation, lamentation, and terror throughout the whole tribe.

"Scarcely anything belonging to the ship was saved by the Indians, and so terrifying was the effect, so awful the scene, when two other ships passed there soon afterwards, not an Indian would venture to go near them. I knew that the *Tonquin* belonged to the whites at Columbia, I was eighteen days on board of her, and had started long ago with the tidings of her tragical end; but falling sick, I was prevented from coming sooner. There might have been twenty-four days between the time the *Tonquin* left the Columbia and her destruction by the Indians."

Thus ended the sad story of Kasiascall, a story which we at the time believed to be perfectly true; but not many days after, some Indians belonging to the same quarter reached Astoria also, and gave a somewhat different version of the affair, particularly as regarded Kasiascall himself, and what convinced us that he had acted a treacherous part, was the fact, that on hearing that the other Indians were coming, he immediately absconded, and we saw him no more. These Indians confirmed Kasiascall's story in every respect as regarded the destruction of the ill-fated *Tonquin;* but persisted in assuring us that he was not on board at the time, and that he was privy to the whole plot. They said, that before that affair he had caused the death of four white men, and that, early in the morning of the *Tonquin's* fatal day, he had induced the captain, through some plausible artifice, to send a boat with six men to shore, and that neither he nor the six men were on board at the time of her destruction. That in the evening of the same day, Kasiascall himself headed the party who went, and brought the six unfortunate men, after the ship was blown up, to the Indian camp, where they were first tortured with savage cruelty, and then all massacred in the most inhuman manner.

We have now brought the tragical story of the fated *Tonquin* nearly to a close. Wise men profit by experience, listen to counsel, and yield to circumstances. Captain Thorn, on the contrary, looked upon every suggestion as an attempt to dictate to him, despised counsel, and treated advice with contempt. Had he profited either by the errors or misfortunes of others, or had he listened to the dictates of common prudence, and used the means he had at command, the savages along the coast, numerous and hostile as they are, would never have obtained the mastery, nor taken the *Tonquin*. We lament the fate of her unfortunate crew and commander. Captain Thorn had many good qualities—was brave, had the manners of a gentleman, and was an able and experienced seaman; but his temper was cruel and overbearing,—and his fate verifies the sacred decree, that "he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy."

The destruction of the *Tonquin* left Astoria defenceless and almost hopeless, and might have proved fatal to the enterprise; but, whilst these scenes were yet fresh in the minds of the Astorians, and augmented the gloom occasioned by their harassing and perilous situation, the timely arrival of M'Kenzie, with the first division of Mr. Hunt's party, overland, made them for a moment forget that their friends of the *Tonquin* were no more. This seasonable addition to their numbers, with the daily expectation of others—for the main party had not yet arrived—

hushed, for a time, the threatening tone of the Indians, and relieved the whites from that incessant watching which prudence and a regard to safety obliged them to adopt, ever since the first rumour of the *Tonquin's* fate had reached their ears. The subject of the land expedition we shall reserve for the next chapter, concluding the present with a few cursory observations on the conduct of that perfidious wretch, Kasiascall.

After absconding from Astoria, as already stated, he lurked for some time among the neighbouring tribes, trying to stir them up to betray the whites, and take Astoria. He had laid several plans for the purpose; and, being desperate and daring himself, he had, on the 5th of December, with twenty or thirty others of like character, approached the establishment on the south side, through the woods, till within sight of the back gate, with the intention of examining the place, in order to make the attack sure the following morning; but, providentially, his treason was baulked by one of those fortunate incidents which sometimes intervene to save the innocent; for, that very evening, the Astorians, as good luck would have it, had collected some Indians, who, with the whites, made a display at the back gate, with the intention of proceeding next morning to the chase, to hunt up some wild hogs which were roaming at large in the woods; and were, as we were well informed afterwards, seen by Kasiascall and his party as they were making their approaches to the fort. They, supposing from the armed array that their own atrocious designs had been discovered, immediately took to flight, leaving, in the hurry, a gun, a quiver full of arrows, and some other things behind; so that, in all probability, to this circumstance alone the place owed its preservation, and the whites their lives. How precarious is the life of an Indian trader, if we take into consideration the habits of the country and the spirit of the people he has to live among—a people who feel no remorse in using the instruments of death—a people who delight in perfidy! Perfidy is the system of savages, treachery and cunning the instruments of their power, and cruelty and bloodshed the policy of their country.

## CHAPTER X.

**Land expedition—Hunt and M'Kenzie—Montreal recruits—La Chine—Devout farewell—Mackina in 1810—Fur traders of the South—Frolic parties—Comparison between the South and North—Arrival at St. Louis—Recruiting service—Yankees—Canoe-men—Delays at St. Louis—Difficulties—Mr. Miller—The Missouri—Canadian voyageurs—Winter quarters—Mr. Hunt revisits St. Louis—M'Kenzie—Mr. Astor's policy—The Yankees desert—Winter quarters broken up—Rocky Mountains—Pilot knobs—New scenes—Columbia River—The horses abandoned—Take to canoes—The canoes abandoned—Trappers—Mr. Miller—Party on foot—Hardships—Starvation—Conflicting councils—Gloomy prospects—Property *en cache*—The party divided—Three men perish—M'Kenzie's speech—He arrives at Astoria—Mr. Crooks and others left behind—Mr. Hunt's arrival at Astoria—Voyage concluded.**

WE have already mentioned the departure of the land expedition from Montreal, and now propose to follow up its history, through its zig-zag windings and perils, to Columbia, the place of its destination.

The gentleman appointed to head the adventurous party was Mr. Wilson Price Hunt, a citizen of the United States—a person every way qualified for the arduous undertaking. Had Mr. Astor been as fortunate in his choice of a marine commander to conduct his expedition by sea as he was in that of his land expedition, a very different result would have ensued.

Mr. Hunt was also accompanied on this journey by Mr. Donald M'Kenzie, another partner, who had formerly been in the service of the North-West Company. This gentleman had already acquired great experience in the Indian countries, was bold, robust, and peculiarly qualified to lead Canadian voyageurs through thick and thin. Mr. Astor placed great confidence in his abilities, perseverance, and prudence. Under, therefore, two such leaders as Hunt and M'Kenzie, he had, in fact, everything to hope and little to fear.

The trumpet of enterprize was, therefore, no sooner sounded at the office of the new company for recruits, than crowds of blustering voyageurs, of all grades and qualities, flocked thither to enrol themselves under the banner of this grand undertaking. Money was tempting, and Jean Baptiste has ever been fond of novelty. The list of adventurers therefore might have been filled up in an hour; but a different line was pursued. M'Kenzie was too sagacious and wary to be taken in by appearances; he drew a line of distinction, and selected those only who had already given proofs of capacity. The picking and choosing system, however, gave great offence to many; consequently, those who had been rejected put every iron in the fire, out of pure spite, to discourage those already engaged, or about to engage; and the money once expended, little persuasion was required to effect their purpose.

Mr. M'Kenzie, from his knowledge of the Canadian character, wished to engage at once a sufficient number for the enterprize, so that no subsequent delays might interrupt their progress; and this was generally allowed to be the better plan, as we shall have occasion to notice hereafter. But Mr. Hunt—grave, steady, and straightforward, himself—detested the volatile gaiety and ever-changing character of the Canadian voyageurs, and gave a decided preference to Americans, and the mongrel Creoles of the south, who, as he alleged, might be got on the route, either at Mackina or St. Louis; and this was the plan ultimately adopted: so that no more Canadian voyageurs were taken than were barely sufficient to man one large canoe. These men, however, were voyageurs of the first class, whose well-tried experience on the lakes, rivers, and frozen regions of the north, made them anticipate the pleasures of a holiday voyage on the waters of the south—hardy veterans, who thought of nothing but to toil and obey. Such were the men—second to no canoe-men in Canada—that joined the expedition at Montreal. The party now assembled in high spirits, and after bidding a dozen adieux to their friends and companions, embarked at La Chine on the 5th of July. On arriving at St. Anne's, the devout voyageurs, according to usual custom, expressed a wish to go on shore to make their vows at the holy shrine before leaving the island. There, prostrated on the ground, they received the priest's benediction; then embarking, with pipes and song, hied their way up the Ottawa or Grand River for Mackina, which place they reached on the seventeenth day.

Michilimackina, or Mackinaw, was their first resting-place after leaving La Chine; and here they had again to recommence the recruiting service, as at Montreal—with this difference, however, that the Montreal men are expert canoe-men, the Mackina men expert bottle-men. That Canadians in general drink, and sometimes even to excess, must be admitted; but to see drunkenness and debauchery, with all their concomitant vices, carried on systematically, it is necessary to see Mackina.

Here Hunt and M'Kenzie in vain sought recruits, at least such as would suit their purpose; for in the morning they were found drinking, at noon drunk, in the evening dead drunk, and in the night seldom sober. Hogarth's drunkards in Gin Lane and Beer Alley were nothing compared to the drunkards of Mackina at this time. Every nook and corner in the whole island swarmed, at all hours of the day and night, with motley groups of uproarious tipplers and whisky-hunters. Mackina at this time resembled a great bedlam, the frantic inmates running to and fro in wild forgetfulness; so that Mr. Hunt, after spending several weeks, could only pick up a few disorderly Canadians, already ruined in mind and body; whilst the cross-breeds and Yankees kept aloof, viewing the expedition, as an army views a forlorn hope, as destined to destruction. Mr. Hunt now saw and confessed his error in not taking M'Kenzie's salutary advice to engage more voyageurs at Montreal, but regretted most of all the precious time they had lost to no purpose at Mackina, and therefore set about leaving it as soon as possible.

But before we take our leave of a place so noted for gallantry and gossiping, we may observe that it was, at the date of this narrative, the chief rendezvous of the Mackina Fur Company, and a thousand other petty associations of trappers and adventurers, all in some way or other connected with the Indian trade. Here then Mackina was the great outfitting mart of the south—the centre and head-quarters of all those adventurers who frequented the Mississippi and Missouri waters in search of furs and peltries.

These different parties visit Mackina but once a year, and on these occasions make up for their dangers and privations among the Indians by rioting, carousing, drinking, and spending all their gains in a few weeks, sometimes in a few days; and then they return again to the Indians and the wilderness. In this manner these dissolute spendthrifts spin out, in feasting and debauchery, a miserable existence, neither fearing God nor regarding man, till the knife of the savage, or some other violent death, despatches them unpitied.

In the fur trade of the north many have attained to a competency, not a few to independence, and many have realized fortunes after a servitude of years; but in the slippery and ruinous traffic of the south many fortunes have been lost, and an awful sacrifice made of human life; so that of all the adventurers engaged, for half a century past, in the fur trade of that licentious quarter, few, very few indeed, ever left it with even a bare competency.

At Mackina, Mr. Crooks, formerly a trader on the Missouri, joined the expedition as a partner. The odds and ends being now put together, and all ready for a start, the expedition left Mackina on the 12th of August, and crossing over the lake to Green Bay, proceeded up Fox River, then down to Prairie du Chien by the Wisconsin, and from thence drifted down the great Mississippi to St. Louis, where they landed on the 3rd of September.

No sooner had the St. Louis papers announced the arrival of Astor's expedition at that place, than the rendezvous of Hunt and M'Kenzie teemed with visitors of all grades, anxious to enlist in the new company. Pleased with the flattering prospect of soon completing their number, they commenced selecting such countenances as bespoke health and vigour; but, alas! few of that description was to be found in the crowd.

The motley group that presented itself could boast of but few vigorous and efficient hands, being generally little better, if not decidedly worse, than those lounging about the streets of Mackina, a medley of French Creoles, old and worn-out Canadians, Spanish renegades, with a mixture of Indians and Indian half-breds, enervated by indolence, debauchery, and a warm climate. Here, again, Mr. Hunt's thoughts turned to Canada; and in the bitterness of disappointment he was heard to say, "No place like Montreal for hardy and expert voyageurs!" Several Yankees, however, sleek and tall as the pines of the forest, engaged as hunters and trappers; but here again another difficulty presented itself, the sapient Yankees, accustomed to the good things of St. Louis, must have their dainties, their tea, their coffee, and their grog. This caused a jealousy; the Canadians, who lived on the usual coarse fare of the north, began to complain, and insisted on receiving the same treatment which the hunters and trappers had,—such is the force of example; and dissatisfaction once raised is not so easily allayed again. To adjust these differences, Mr. Hunt adopted an expedient which, in place of proving a remedy, rather augmented the evil. Thinking it easier, or at all events cheaper, to reduce his own countrymen, being but few in number, to the Canadian pot-luck, rather than pamper Jean Baptiste with luxurious notions, he issued his orders accordingly, that all denominations should fare alike; but Jonathan was not to be told what he was to eat, nor what he was to drink. Finding, however, Mr. Hunt determined to enforce the order, the new comers shouldered their rifles to a man, and, in the true spirit of Yankee independence, marched off with their advance in their pockets, and the expedition saw them no more; and not only that, but they raised such a hue-and-cry against the parsimonious conduct of the new enterprize, that not a man could be afterwards got to engage; and this state of things the other traders, and particularly the Missouri Fur Company, turned to their advantage, by representing to the people the horrors, the dangers, and privations that awaited our adventurous friends; that if they were fortunate enough to escape being scalped by the Indians, they would assuredly be doomed, like Nebuchodnezzar, to eat grass, and never would return to tell the sad tale of their destruction.

While Mr. Hunt's affairs thus seemed almost at a stand, a new impulse was given to the expedition by the timely acquisition of another partner, a Mr. Miller, who had been a trader up the Missouri, had considerable experience among Indians along the route to be followed, and was a great favourite with the people at St. Louis. As soon, therefore, as Mr. Miller joined the expedition, people from all quarters began again to enlist under the banner of the new company. Canoemen, hunters, trappers, and interpreters were no longer wanting, and the number of each being completed, the expedition left St. Louis, after a vexatious delay of forty-eight days.

On the 21st of October the expedition started in three boats, and soon after reached the mouth of the Missouri, up which the party proceeded. Our Canadian voyageurs were now somewhat out of their usual element. Boats and oars, the mode of navigating the great rivers of the south, were new to men who had been brought up to the paddle, the cheering song, and the bark canoe of the north. They detested the heavy and languid drag of a Mississippi boat, and sighed for the paddle and song of former days. They soon, however, became expert at the oar, and Mr. Hunt, who was somewhat partial to the south men, was forced to acknowledge that their merits were not to be compared to the steady, persevering, habits of the men of the north. Yet the progress was but slow, scarcely averaging twenty-one miles a day, so that it was the 16th of November before they reached the Nodowa, a distance of only 450 miles up the Missouri, and there, from the coldness of the weather and lateness of the season, they were obliged to winter.

Mr. M'Kenzie, accustomed, during the days of the North-West, to start from Montreal and reach the mouth of Columbia river, or Great Bear's Lake, the same season, did not much like this slow travelling, and had his advice been acted on, the expedition, in place of wintering at the Nodowa, would have wintered on the waters of the Columbia.

Here it was that Mr. M'Lellan, another partner, joined the expedition. This gentleman was one of the first shots in America, nothing could escape his keen eye and steady hand; hardy, enterprizing, and brave as a lion: on the whole, he was considered a great acquisition to the party.

After settling the winter quarters, Mr. Hunt returned to St. Louis, which place he reached on the 20th of January 1811, and before he joined his wintering friends at the Nodowa River again, it was the 17th of April.

During Mr. Hunt's visit at St. Louis, orders arrived, among other instructions, from Mr. Astor, that the sole command of the expedition should be vested in him alone, although hitherto it was intrusted to Hunt and M'Kenzie. This underhand proceeding of Astor's gave umbrage to the other partners, and particularly to M'Kenzie, and added new difficulties to Mr. Hunt's situation, by throwing the whole responsibility of the enterprize upon him alone; but such was Astor, that no confidence could be placed in his arrangements; his measures, like the wind, were ever changing.

During Mr. Hunt's absence, several changes had taken place in the wintering camp; some of the men had deserted, others again, under various pretences shook themselves clear of the ill-omened undertaking, and even after Mr. Hunt's return, several more turned their backs and walked off, without the least compunction, and all those who so unceremoniously and treacherously left the expedition, excepting one, were Americans. Mr. Hunt, in his eagerness to press forward, was perfectly worn out with anxiety.

On the 22d of April, however, the adventurers broke up their camp, or winter quarters, and bent their course up the strong and rapid current of the Missouri, no less formidable in itself, than dangerous on account of the numerous savage hordes that infest its banks.

On the 14th of September the party reached the heights of the Rocky Mountains, safe and in good spirits, after many hairbreadth escapes, and drew near to the Pilot Knobs, or *Trois Tetons*, that great landmark, so singular and conspicuous, near which is the romantic source of Louis River, or the great south branch of the Columbia. From the Nodowa to the Pilot Knobs occupied them one hundred and forty-five days.

The Pilot Knobs, so cheering to our wayfaring friends, proved but the beginning of their real troubles: for, after various projects and plans, it was resolved, on the 18th of October, to abandon their hitherto serviceable and trusty horses, and they were, therefore, turned loose, to the number of one hundred and eighty, and the party embarking in fifteen crazy and frail canoes, undertook to descend the rugged and boiling channels of the head waters of the great south branch of the Columbia. Having proceeded about 350 miles, they were at last compelled to abandon the project of navigating these bold and dangerous waters; but not before one of their best steersmen was drowned, and they were convinced as to the impracticability of proceeding by water.

At this time, two small and separate parties, consisting in all of twelve persons, were fitted out as trappers to hunt the beaver, and, to the astonishment of all, Mr. Miller, in one of his headstrong fits, turned his back on the expedition abruptly, and became a trapper also.

The canoes being now abandoned altogether, various plans were thought of; two or three parties were sent out as scouts, to try and fall in with Indians, provisions being now so scarce that the most gloomy apprehensions were entertained. These parties, however, saw but few Indians, and those few were destitute themselves. At this time a starving dog that could hardly crawl along was a feast to our people, and even the putrid and rotten skins of animals were resorted to in order to sustain life. Whilst these parties were exhausting themselves to little or no purpose, another party attempted to recover the horses, which had been so thoughtlessly and imprudently left behind; but they returned unsuccessful, after a week's trial and hunger. A fifth party was despatched ahead to explore the river, and they also returned with the most gloomy presage—all failed, and all fell back again on the cheerless camp, to augment the general despondency; the party now, as a last resource, set about depositing and securing the goods and baggage, by putting them in *caches;* this done, the party finally separated into four bands, each headed by a partner, and the object of one and all was, to reach the mouth of the Columbia by the best and shortest way. That part of the country where they were was destitute of game, and the provisions of the whole party taken together were scarcely enough for two days' journey. At that season of the year, the Indians retire to the distant mountains, and leave the river till the return of spring, which accounts for their absence at this time.

We have already stated that one man, named Clappine, had been drowned—another of the name of Prevost had become deranged through starvation, and drowned himself—and a third, named Carrier, lingered behind and perished; these fatal disasters happened in the parties conducted by Messrs. Hunt and Crooks. M'Kenzie and his party were more fortunate: as soon as the division of the men and property took place, that bold North-Wester called his little band together,—"Now, my friends," said he, "there is still hope before us; to linger on our way, to return back, or to be discouraged and stand still, is death—a death of all others the most miserable; therefore, take courage; let us persevere and push on ahead, and all will end well; the foremost will find something to eat, the last may fare worse." On hearing these cheering words, the poor fellows took off their caps, gave three cheers, and at once shot ahead. They kept as near the river as possible, and got on wonderfully well, until they came into the narrow and rugged defiles of the Blue Mountains: there they suffered much, and were at one time five days without a mouthful to eat, when, fortunately, they caught a beaver; and on this small animal and its skin, scarcely a mouthful to each, the whole party had to subsist for three days. At this time some of them were so reduced that M'Kenzie himself had to carry on his own back two of his men's blankets, being a strong and robust man, and long accustomed to the hardships and hard fare of the north. He alone, of all the party, stood the trial well; and, by still cheering and encouraging his men on, he brought them at length to the main waters of the Columbia, at Walla-Walla, a little below the great forks; from thence they descended with the current to the long-looked-for Astoria, where they arrived safe and sound on the 10th of January 1812.

Mr. Hunt and the other parties still lingered behind; and from the severe trials and privations which M'Kenzie, who was reckoned the boldest and most experienced adventurer in the expedition, suffered, fears were entertained as to the safety of the other parties, more particularly as many gloomy reports had reached Astoria; some saying that they had been killed by the Indians, others that they had died of hunger in the mountains; but at last, on the 15th of February, the joyful cry of white men approaching, announced at Astoria the glad tidings of Mr. Hunt's arrival.

The emaciated, downcast looks and tattered garments of our friends, all bespoke their extreme sufferings during a long and severe winter. To that Being alone who preserveth all those who put their trust in Him, were in this instance due, and at all times, our thanksgiving and gratitude.

## CHAPTER XI.

**Doings at Astoria—Three parties on foot—Their object—M'Lellan's resolution—Hostile attack at the Long Narrows—Mr. Reed—Two Indians shot—Heroic conduct of M'Lellan—Difficulties adjusted—Advance of the party—Remarks—Arrival at Oakinacken—Departure again for Astoria—Scene at Umatallow—Mr. Crooks's adventures and suffering—Yeck-a-tap-am—Umatallow left—Merit rewarded—Arrival of the party at Astoria—The ship *Beaver* there also.**

As the spring advanced, various resolutions were passed, and preparations made in furtherance of the views of the concern for the current year. In the prosecution of these plans, three parties were set on foot for the interior; one, consisting of three men, under Mr. Reed, for New York, overland; another, under Mr. Farnham, for the goods left *en cache* by Mr. Hunt on his journey; and a third, to be conducted by Mr. Robert Stuart, for Oakinacken, with supplies for that post.

On the 22nd of March, all these parties, consisting of seventeen men, left Astoria together, under the direction of Mr. Stuart. On the departure of the party, Mr. M'Lellan, following the example of his colleague, Mr. Miller, abruptly resigned, and joined the party for New York. This gentleman possessed many excellent qualities, but they were all obscured and thrown into the shade by a fickle and unsteady mind.

Everything went on smoothly till the party reached the long narrows; that noted resort of plunderers, where few can pass without paying a heavy tax; but there, while in the act of making the portage, the party being unavoidably divided, they were furiously attacked by a strong party of Indians. Mr. Reed, bearer of the express for New York, was knocked down in the scuffle, and severely wounded; and had not M'Lellan, with a bravery and presence of mind peculiar to himself, leaped dexterously over a canoe, he would have been felled to the ground; but his agility saved him, and in all probability saved the whole party, for he instantly shot the man who aimed the blow, then drawing a pistol from his belt, shot him who had assailed Reed dead at his feet; then clapping his hand to his mouth, in the true Indian style, he gave the war-whoop, fired his rifle, and the Indians fled. During the critical scuffle, the despatches were carried off by the savages, and a few other articles of but little value. The firing and the war-whoop summoned in a moment all the whites together, and the Indians, being panic-struck at M'Lellan's heroic conduct, retired rather disconcerted, giving Mr. Stuart and his party time to collect their property, embark, and depart.

They had not proceeded far, however, when the Indians assembled again in battle array, and taking up a position some distance ahead, appeared determined to dispute the passage. But Mr. Stuart was on the alert, and took up his station on a rock some distance from the shore, and from the savages also; when, after a momentary suspense, and many wild flourishes and threats on the part of the Indians, a parley ensued, and Mr. Stuart had the good fortune to negociate a peace. Six blankets and a few trifling articles satisfied the Indians, or at least they preferred them to the doubtful issue of a second attack. As soon, therefore, as they had received the stipulated oblation for their dead, they retired, and our friends pursued their journey without any further molestation; but for some days and nights after, our party kept a good look-out.

Mr. Stuart, although brave and prudent, erred in attempting to pass the portage in the night; that stealthy proceeding revealed their fears or weakness, and was, in all probability, the cause of the whole disaster. Mr. Reed gradually recovered, but the despatches were lost; so that there was an end to the expedition overland. Mr. Reed and his men therefore accompanied Mr. Stuart, as did Mr. Farnham and the *cache* party; it not being considered prudent to divide. The party now continued their route together, and arrived safe at Oakinacken on the 24th of April. Here they remained for five days, when the party left for Astoria, in four canoes, carrying off with them 2500 beaver skins. Mr. David Stuart and two of our men accompanied the party down, leaving at Oakinacken only myself, Mr. Donald M'Gillis, and one man.

On their way down, one morning a little after sunrise, while near the Umatallow River, where a crowd of Indians were assembled together, they were hailed loudly in English to "come on shore." The canoes instantly closed together, and listened with some anxiety to hear the words repeated. They had no sooner done so than the voice again called out to "come on shore." To shore the canoes instantly steered; when, to the surprise of all, who should be there, standing like two spectres, but Mr. Crooks and John Day, who, it will be remembered, had been left by Mr. Hunt among the Snake Indians the preceding autumn; but so changed and emaciated were they, that our people for some time could scarcely recognise them to be white men; and we cannot do better here than give their story in their own words. The following is, therefore, Mr. Crooks's account of their adventures and their sufferings:—

"After being left by Mr. Hunt, we remained for some time with the Snakes, who were very kind to us. When they had anything to eat, we ate also; but they soon departed, and being themselves without provisions, of course they left us without any.

We had to provide for ourselves the best way we could. As soon, therefore, as the Indians went off, we collected some brushwood and coarse hay, and made a sort of booth or wigwam to shelter us from the cold; we then collected some firewood; but before we got things in order, John Day grew so weak that when he sat down he could not rise again without help. Following the example of the Indians, I dug up roots for our sustenance; but not knowing how to cook them, we were nearly poisoned. In this plight, we unfortunately let the fire go out, and for a day and night we both lay in a torpid state, unable to strike fire, or to collect dry fuel. We had now been a day without food, or even water to drink, and death appeared inevitable. But Providence is ever kind. Two straggling Indians happening to come our way, relieved us. They made us a fire, got us some water, and gave us something to eat; but seeing some roots we had collected for food lying in a corner, they gave us to understand that they would poison us if we ate them. If we had had a fire, those very roots would have been our first food, for we had nothing else to eat; and who can tell but the hand of a kind and superintending Providence was in all this? These poor fellows staid with us the greater part of two days, and gave us at their departure about two pounds of venison. We were really sorry to lose them.

"On the same day, after the Indians had left us, a very large wolf came prowling about our hut, when

John Day, with great exertions and good luck, shot the ferocious animal dead; and to this fortunate hit I think we owed our lives. The flesh of the wolf we cut up and dried, and laid it by for some future emergency, and in the mean time feasted upon the skin; nor did we throw away the bones, but pounded them between stones, and with some roots made a kind of broth, which, in our present circumstances, we found very good. After we had recovered our strength a little, and were able to walk, we betook ourselves to the mountains in search of game; and, when unsuccessful in the chase, we had recourse to our dried wolf. For two months we wandered about, barely sustaining life with our utmost exertions. All this time we kept travelling to and fro, until we happened, by mere chance, to fall on the Umatallow River; and then following it, we made the Columbia about a mile above this place, on the 15th day of April, according to our reckoning. Our clothes being all torn and worn out, we suffered severely from cold; but on reaching this place, the Indians were very kind to us. This man," pointing to an old grey-headed Indian, called Yeck-a-tap-am, "in particular treated us like a father. After resting ourselves for two days with the good old man and his people, we set off, following the current, in the delusive hope of being able to reach our friends at the mouth of the Columbia, as the Indians gave us to understand that white men had gone down there in the winter, which we supposed must have been Mr. Hunt and his party.

"We had proceeded on our journey nine days, without interruption, and were not far from the falls, which the Indians made us comprehend by uttering the word 'tumm,' which we understood to mean noise or fall; when one morning, as we were sitting near the river, gazing on the beautiful stream before us, the Indians in considerable numbers collected around us, in the usual friendly manner: after some little time, however, one of them got up, and, under pretence of measuring the length of my rifle with his bow, took it in his hands; another in the same manner, and at the same moment, took John Day's rifle from him. The moment our guns were in their possession, the two Indians darted out of the crowd to some distance, and assuming a menacing attitude, pointed them at us; in the same instant, all the others fled from us and joined the two who had carried off our guns. All began to intimate to us by signs, in the most uproarious and wild manner, that some of their people had been killed by the whites, and threatened to kill us in turn. In this critical conjunction, John Day drew his knife, with the intention of rushing upon the fellows to get hold of his gun; but I pointed out to him the folly of such a step, which must have instantly proved fatal to us, and he desisted.

"The Indians then closed in upon us, with guns pointed and bows drawn, on all sides, and by force stripped us of our clothes, ammunition, knives, and everything else, leaving us naked as the day we were born, and, by their movements and gestures, it appeared evident that there was a disposition on their part to kill us; but, after a long and angry debate, in which two or three old men seemed to befriend us, they made signs for us to be off: seeing the savages determined, and more of them still collecting, we slowly turned round, and went up the river again, expecting every moment to receive a ball or an arrow. After travelling some little distance, we looked back and saw the savages quarrelling about the division of the booty; but fearing pursuit, we left the river and took to the hills. All that day we travelled without tasting food, and at night concealed ourselves among the rocks—without fire, food, or clothing. Next day we drew near to the river, and picked up some fish-bones at a deserted Indian encampment; with these we returned to the rocks again, and pounding them with stones, tried to eat a little, but could not manage to swallow any: that night also we hid ourselves among the rocks, but at last we resolved to keep by the river, and, as it seemed impossible to avoid death, either by the Indians or starvation, to brave all dangers in the attempt to reach our good old friend Yeck-a-tap-am—and Providence still guarded us.

"Soon after we arrived at the river, we unexpectedly fell on a small Indian hut, with only two old people and a child in it: we approached with hesitating and doubtful steps, but on entering the solitary wigwam, the poor inmates were more frightened than ourselves; and, had they had timely notice of our approach, they would have certainly fled. The good people, however, gave us fish, broth, and roots to eat; and this was the first food we had tasted, and the first fire we had seen, for four days and four nights. Our feet were severely cut and bleeding, for want of shoes; yet we lost no time, but set off, and arrived here three days ago, and our good old friend, Yeck-a-tap-am, received us again with open arms, and gave us these skins to cover our nakedness, as ye now see.

"The good old man then killed a horse, which his people cut up and dried for us, and with that supply we had resolved to set out this very day and retrace our steps back again to St. Louis overland, and when you came in sight we were just in the act of tying up our little bundles; regretting, most of all, that we had no means of recompensing our good and faithful friend Yeck-a-tap-am."

Mr. Crooks having concluded his narrative, Mr. Stuart called the old man to him, and clothed him from head to foot for his friendly services. Mr. Crooks and his fellow-sufferer then cordially shaking hands with Yeck-a-tap-am, the party pushed off, and continued their voyage. On arriving at the place where Crooks had been robbed, the party put on shore; but the Indians, having notice of their approach, fled to the interior; so that they had no opportunity of either recovering the guns or inquiring into the affair.

From the long narrows the party met with no interruption, but continued their route till they reached Astoria, on the 12th of May, where Crooks and all the party were greeted with a hearty welcome; and what made the meeting more joyous was the safe arrival, three days previous, of the Company's ship *Beaver* from New York, with a supply of goods, and a reinforcement of men.

## CHAPTER XII.

General meeting of the partners—Resolutions passed—Departure of the parties for the interior—Mr. Clarke—The cascades—Wyampam, or the Long Narrows—Situation of the party—Loss of time—Mr. M'Kenzie—A stroll through the Indian camp—Mr. Clarke's alarms—Command transferred—Reed's rifle recovered—A robber in irons—The five shots—Yeck-a-tap-am rewarded—Mr. Stuart's departure for St. Louis—Second division—Summer trip to She Whaps—Boullard and his squaw—Mr. Stuart's arrival at Oakinacken—Departure for She Whaps—Winter operations at Oakinacken—Visits—Travelling scenes—A night in the snow—Jacque and his powder-horn—Mr. Stuart's account of his journey—Arrival at Walla Walla.

All parties being now at their posts, for the first time a meeting of the partners was convened, at which the following resolutions, among others, were passed—"That Mr. David Stuart proceed to his post at Oakinacken, explore the country northward, and establish another post between that and New Caledonia: That Mr. M'Kenzie winter on the Snake country; recover the goods left in *cache* there by Mr. Hunt; and report on the state of the country: That Mr. Clarke winter at Spokane, as an intermediate post, between Mr. Stuart on the north and Mr. M'Kenzie on the south, in order to oppose and keep in check the North-West Company established there: That Mr. Robert Stuart proceed to St. Louis across land, with despatches for Mr. Astor: That all these several parties, for mutual safety, advance together as far as the forks, or entrance of the great south branch." It was likewise settled at this council, "That Mr. Hunt should accompany the ship *Beaver* to the Russian settlements on his coasting trip." These preparatory steps being taken, the several parties, numbering sixty-two persons, left Astoria for the interior on the 29th of June.

This was the first formidable and regular party that left Astoria, which seemed to impart to the concern a character of permanency and success, and was conducted by Mr. Clarke, the brightest star in the Columbian constellation, as Mr. Astor expressed himself—for to him, by mutual consent, was conceded the important command.

On their progress, no interruption impeded the party till they reached the cascades, where the Indians were rather troublesome, and shot a few arrows at the canoes as they passed; but on the party landing all was submission; the portage was made; and the party advanced at a rapid rate till they reached the long narrows: that intricate and gloomy pass is constantly infested with gambling Indians of the vilest character.

Here, as usual, the thievish subjects of Wyampam assembled in numbers, and showed a formidable and determined front. To one used to their gasconading threats, there was nothing in all this to intimidate; but to Mr. Clarke, although a man of nerve on most occasions, the sight was overwhelming. He stood appalled, and almost speechless. In short, he looked upon all as irretrievably lost. To advance, to retreat, or to stand still with safety, seemed to him equally hopeless. Guards and patrols were stationed round the tempting bales of goods, and days and nights wasted in useless harangues and parleys, without result. Mr. Clarke's lofty tent, pitched in the centre of the arena, as a beacon on the top of a hill shining afar, was guarded on every side by trusty Sandwich Islanders; while the rest, forming the circumvallation, had to protect all within. This state of things continued for several days and nights, until Mr. M'Kenzie and Mr. David Stuart, taking a voluntary stroll for upwards of two miles through the Indian camp, proved by their safe return that the alarm and fears of Mr. Clarke were utterly groundless, and urged him to press forward, as every moment's delay only increased the danger.

Mr. Clarke, however, viewed their situation as desperate, and the thought of advancing as utterly hopeless. Mr. M'Kenzie then told him that he could wait no longer, but would proceed with his own party alone; Mr. Stuart said the same. To this threat Mr. Clarke replied, that if they could pass he could pass also, but would not answer for the consequences. Mr. M'Kenzie replied that he would answer for them, and therefore took upon himself the command, and immediately ordered the tents to be struck and the party to advance. The party advanced accordingly, and by adopting judicious arrangements got through the suspicious pass without molestation or loss.

Before we proceed further, however, we may here mention that whilst M'Kenzie and Stuart were on their ramble through the Indian camp, they saw in a corner of one of the chief's lodges the rifle which had been taken from Mr. Reed when he was wounded, and they were resolved at all hazards to recover it.

As soon, therefore, as all were safe above the narrows, M'Kenzie took eight men, well armed, with him, and went direct to the chief's lodge; then stationing four of his men at the door, he, himself, went in with the other four, and demanded the stolen rifle; but the chief denied that he had it, or that it was in his lodge. Mr. M'Kenzie, however, insisted that it was there, and said he was determined to have it; and seeing that fair means would not avail he drew his dagger, and began to turn over and cut up everything that came in his way, until at last the rifle was discovered, when M'Kenzie upbraided the chief for falsehood and dishonesty, took the rifle, and with his party made for the door of the lodge. The Indians were now assembling together in crowds; but before they had time to decide on any step, M'Kenzie and his men were out of their reach, carrying the rifle with them. The business was well timed, for had they delayed some minutes longer in the lodge, it is hard to say what the consequences might have been. Early in the morning our party proceeded on their journey; passed the falls, and encamped for the night near the spot where Mr. Crooks and John Day had been robbed on their forlorn adventures down the river.

The Indians, however, flocked round our party as if nothing had happened, and among the rest the ruffian who took John Day's rifle was recognised. He was immediately laid hold of and secured in one of the canoes. Mr. Crooks's rifle was alone recovered. Some were for hanging the offender, others were for cutting his ears off; but after keeping him a prisoner for two days, he was set at liberty without any further punishment; and, under all circumstances, that was perhaps the wisest course. Before he went off, however, Mr. M'Lellan, to show him the effect of fire-arms in the hands of the whites, set up a piece of board, with a white spot on it, only two inches in diameter, and in three successive shots, at a hundred yards distance, with his rifle he pierced the bull's eye; then stopping up the holes of two of the shots, put a hazel-nut in the third, and broke it with two successive shots at the same distance.

On passing the Umatallow, Yeck-a-tap-am was not forgotten, Mr. Crooks giving him a chief's coat in return for the kindness shown to the latter while in distress.

On the 29th of July, all the parties arrived safe at Walla-Walla; here they were to separate, and here it was that Mr. Robert Stuart, after staying for two days with Tummeatapam, and purchasing ten horses, the number requisite for his journey overland, took his departure for St. Louis. The party consisted of Mr. Stuart, Benjamin Jones, André Vallar, Francis Le Clerc, and Mr. Crooks and Mr. M'Lellan. The two latter gentlemen relinquished all connection with the concern, and joined the party for St. Louis. This little, bold, and courageous party bade adieu to their associates, and commenced their perilous undertaking on the 31st of July. In the mean time, the main party struck off at the forks, leaving M'Kenzie and Clarke on their way up the Snake River, or south branch, to their respective destinations. We shall, for the present, accompany Mr. David Stuart to his wintering ground, and back again to this place, where the parties agreed to meet in the following June. The histories of the other parties shall be recounted hereafter, each in its proper place.

From the forks, Mr. Stuart and his party, ascending the north branch, continued their voyage, and arrived at Oakinacken on the 12th of August. Here it will be remembered that when the party left this on the 28th of April for Astoria, I remained at Oakinacken, having only Mr. M'Gillis and one man, named Boullard, with me. On the 6th of May I started with Boullard and an Indian, with sixteen horses, on a trading excursion, and following Mr.

Stuart's route of last winter, reached the She Whaps on Thompson's River, the tenth day, and there encamped at a place called by the Indians Cumcloups, near the entrance of the north branch. From this station I sent messages to the different tribes around, who soon assembled, bringing with them their furs. Here we stayed for ten days. The number of Indians collected on the occasion could not have been less than 2,000. Not expecting to see so many, I had taken but a small quantity of goods with me; nevertheless, we loaded all our horses—so anxious were they to trade, and so fond of tobacco, that one morning before breakfast I obtained one hundred and ten beavers for leaf-tobacco, at the rate of five leaves per skin; and at last, when I had but one yard of white cotton remaining, one of the chiefs gave me twenty prime beaver skins for it.

Having now finished our trade, we prepared to return home; but before we could get our odds-and-ends ready, Boullard, my trusty second, got involved in a love affair, which had nearly involved us all in a disagreeable scrape with the Indians. This was the very man Mr. Stuart got from Mr. Thompson in exchange for Cox, the Owhyhee. He was as full of latent tricks as a serpent is of guile. Unknown to me, the old fellow had been teasing the Indians for a wife, and had already an old squaw at his heels, but could not raise the wind to pay the whole purchase-money. With an air of effrontery he asked me to unload one of my horses to satisfy the demands of the old father-in-law, and because I refused him, he threatened to leave me and to remain with the savages. Provoked at his conduct, I suddenly turned round and horsewhipped the fellow, and, fortunately, the Indians did not interfere. The castigation had a good effect: it brought the amorous gallant to his senses—the squaw was left behind. We started; but were frequently impeded on our journey by the sudden rise of the rivers. As we were often obliged to swim our horses, our packs of beaver got now and then wet, but without sustaining any serious injury; and on the 12th of July we reached home, well pleased both with our trade and the reception we had met with from the Indians. On this trip we had frequent opportunities of paying attention to the aspect and topography of the country through which we passed.

On the 25th of August, Mr. Stuart, with his men and merchandise, left Oakinacken to winter among the She Whaps, appointing me, as a recompense for my successful voyage to Cumcloups, to the post of Oakinacken. Although not hitherto formally appointed, I had virtually been in charge of it since its first establishment. Having escorted Mr. Stuart for seventy miles, I returned to prepare my own post for the winter operations. After spending all the autumn in trading excursions, according to the custom of the country, I resolved on the 2nd of December to pay a visit to Mr. John Clarke, at Fort Spokane, which place we reached on the fourth day. Spokane lies due east from Oakinacken—distant about 150 miles. The face of the country is rocky and barren.

I had never seen Mr. Clarke before; but certainly a more affable, generous, and kind gentleman in his own house could not be met with.

During the three days I remained with him, I had frequent opportunities of observing the sly and underhand dealings of the competing parties, for the opposition posts of the North-West Company and Mr. Clarke were built contiguous to each other. When the two parties happened to meet, they made the amplest protestations of friendship and kindness, and a stranger, unacquainted with the politics of Indian trade, would have pronounced them sincere; but the moment their backs were turned, they tore each other to pieces. Each party had its manœuvreing scouts out in all directions, watching the motions of the Indians, and laying plots and plans to entrap or foil each other. He that got most skins, never minding the cost or the crime, was the cleverest fellow; and under such tutors the Indians were apt disciples. They played their tricks also, and turned the foibles and wiles of their teachers to their own advantage.

Leaving Spokane Fort, we turned towards home again. In the evening of the 13th, not far from home, as we were ascending a very steep hill, at the top of which is a vast plain, I and my man had to walk, leaving our horses to shift for themselves, and climb up as they could; and so steep and intricate were the windings that I had to throw off my coat, which, together with my gun, I laid on one of the pack-horses. The moment we reached the top, and before we could gather our horses or look about us, we were overtaken by a tremendous cold snow-storm; the sun became instantly obscured, and the wind blew a hurricane. We were taken by surprise. I immediately called out to the men to shift for themselves, and let the horses do the same. Just at this moment I accidentally came in contact with one of the loaded horses, for such was the darkness that we could not see three feet ahead; but, unfortunately, it was not the horse on which I had laid my coat and gun. I instantly cut the tyings, threw off the load, and mounting on the pack-saddle, rode off at full speed through the deep snow, in the hopes of reaching a well-known place of shelter not far off; but in the darkness and confusion I missed the place, and at last got so benumbed with cold that I could ride no farther; and, besides, my horse was almost exhausted. In this plight I dismounted and took to walking, in order to warm myself. But no place of shelter was to be found. Night came on; the storm increased in violence; my horse gave up; and I myself was so exhausted, wandering through the deep snow, that I could go no further. Here I halted, unable to decide what to do. My situation appeared desperate: without my coat; without my gun; without even a fire-steel. In such a situation I must perish. At last I resolved on digging a hole in the snow; but in trying to do so, I was several times in danger of being suffocated with the drift and eddy. In this dilemma I unsaddled my horse, which stood motionless as a statue in the snow. I put the saddle under me, and the saddle-cloth, about the size of a handkerchief, round my shoulders, then squatted down in the dismal hole, more likely to prove my grave than a shelter. On entering the hole I said to myself, "Keep awake and live; sleep and die." I had not been long, however, in this dismal burrow before the cold, notwithstanding my utmost exertions to keep my feet warm, gained so fast upon me that I was obliged to take off my shoes, then pull my trousers, by little and little, over my feet, till at last I had the waistband round my toes; and all would not do. I was now reduced to the last shift, and tried to keep my feet warm at the risk of freezing my body. At last I had scarcely strength to move a limb; the cold was gaining fast upon me; and the inclination to sleep almost overcame me. In this condition I passed the whole night; nor did the morning promise me much relief; yet I thought it offered me a glimpse of hope, and that hope induced me to endeavour to break out of my snowy prison. I tried, but in vain, to put on my frozen shoes; I tried again and again before I could succeed. I then dug my saddle out of the snow, and after repeated efforts, reached the horse and put the saddle on; but could not myself get into the saddle.

Ten o'clock next day came before there was any abatement of the storm, and when it did clear up a little I knew not where I was; still it was cheering to see the storm abate. I tried again to get into the saddle; and when I at last succeeded, my half-frozen horse refused to carry me, for he could scarcely lift a leg. I then alighted and tried to walk; but the storm broke out again with redoubled violence. I saw no hope of saving myself but to kill the horse, open him, and get into his body, and I drew my hunting-knife for the purpose; but then it occurred to me that the body would freeze, and that I could not, in that case, extricate myself. I therefore abandoned the idea, laid my knife by, and tried again to walk, and again got into the saddle. The storm now abating a little, my horse began to move; and I kept wandering about through the snow till three o'clock in the afternoon, when the storm abated altogether; and the sun coming out, I recognised my position. I was then not two miles from my own house, where I arrived at dusk; and it was high time, for I could not have gone much farther; and after all it was my poor horse that saved me, for had I set out on foot, I should never, in my exhausted condition, have reached the house.

How my men weathered the storm we shall presently see. Two of them got home a little before myself, but much frost-bitten. The other two had not made their appearance yet; but some Indians were instantly despatched in search of them; and one was found that night; the other not till the next day. He was carried home almost in a dying state, but ultimately recovered. One of the horses was found dead; all the rest were recovered, but the load which I had thrown off the horse which I rode was totally destroyed by the wolves. Such a destructive storm had not been felt in these parts for many years previous. An Indian, with his whole family, consisting of seven persons, perished by it; two more were severely frost-bitten, and more than twenty horses were lost.

On the 20th of December, just six days after my return from Spokane, I set out with one man on a visit to Mr. Stuart, at the She Whaps, and arrived at Cumcloups on the last day of the year; soon after, Mr. Stuart reached his wintering place. The North-West, jealous of that quarter, followed hard at his heels, and built alongside of him. So that there was opposition there as well as at Mr. Clarke's place, but without the trickery and manœuvring. M. La Rocque, the North-West clerk in charge, and Mr. Stuart, were open and candid, and on friendly terms. The field before them was wide enough for both parties, and, what is more, they thought it so; consequently they followed a fair and straightforward course of trade; with Mr. Stuart I remained five days, and in coming home I took a near and unknown route, in order to explore a part of the country I had not seen before; but I chose a bad season of the year to satisfy my curiosity: we got bewildered in the mountains and deep snows, our progress was exceedingly slow, tedious, and discouraging. We were at one time five days in making as many miles, our horses suffered greatly, had nothing to eat for four days and four nights, not a blade of grass appearing above the snow, and their feet were so frightfully cut with the crust on the snow that they could scarcely move, so that we were within a hair's breadth of losing every one of them.

One evening, the fuel being damp, we were unable to kindle a brisk fire. In this predicament, I called on Jacques to give me a little powder, a customary thing in such cases; but in place of handing me a little powder, or taking a little out in his hand, wise Jacques, uncorking his horn, began to pour it out on the heated coal. It instantly exploded, and blew all up before it, sending Jacques himself sprawling six feet from where he stood, and myself nearly as far, both for some time stunned and senseless, while the fire was completely extinguished.

We, however, received no injury beyond the fright, though Jacques held the horn in his hand when it was blown to atoms. On recovering, we were not in the best humour, and sat down for some time in gloomy mood; cold, however, soon admonished us to try again; but it was midnight before we could get a fire lighted and ourselves warmed, and we passed a disagreeable night without sleep or food. We hastened next morning from this unlucky encampment, and getting clear of the mountains, we descended into a low and pleasant valley, where we found the Indians I had been in search of, and something both for ourselves and our horses to eat. At the Indian camp we remained one day, got the information we required about the country, procured some furs, and then, following the course of the Samilk-a-meigh River, got to Oakinacken at the forks; thence we travelled almost day and night till the 24th of January, when we reached home again. On this journey we met with several cross purposes, and suffered a good deal from both cold and hunger, so that I got heartily tired of visiting. During my absence, Mr. M'Gillis managed matters at the post very well. Several other trading trips took place in the course of the spring, and these, with the ordinary routine business of the place, kept our hands full till the hour of embarkation arrived. In the course of the last year I had travelled in various directions through the country, 3,355 miles.

On the 13th of May, Mr. Stuart, with his men and furs, arrived from the She Whaps. In reference to his post, he remarked, "I have passed a winter nowise unpleasant, the opposition, it is true, gave me a good deal of anxiety when it first arrived, but we agreed very well, and made as much, perhaps more, than if we had been enemies. I sent out parties in all directions, north as far as Fraser's River, and for two hundred miles up the south branch. The accounts from all quarters were most satisfactory.

The country is everywhere rich in furs, and the natives very peaceable. The She Whaps will be one of the best beaver posts in the country, and I have now brought a fine stock of valuable furs with me."

After remaining at Oakinacken for ten days, to get the furs packed and pressed, Mr. Stuart and myself, with the men and furs, set out for Walla Walla, the place of general rendezvous settled upon last summer, where we arrived on the 30th of May; the other parties not having yet come in.

# CHAPTER XIII.

**Mr. Clarke—Stragglers—Hard travelling—Cox's pilgrimage—Visit to Spokane—Trade—Mr. Pillet—Mr. Farnham—Cootanais and Flatheads—M'Lennan—Plunge in the lake—Adventures—Outposts—Catatouch chief—Curiosity—Fracas—Introduction of civilization—Commotion—M'Kenzie—Great Snake River—Caches robbed—Canadian wanderers—Character of the Shahaptains—Visit to Spokane—M'Tavish—Account of the war—Winter travels—M'Kenzie at Astoria—New resolves—M'Kenzie's return to his post—Indian chiefs—Bold enterprize—Property recovered—Chiefs and their horses—Stratagems—Indians outwitted—Plotting—Friendly Island—Conference—Marauding propensities—Treaty of peace—System changed—Plentiful market—The island abandoned—Arrival at Walla Walla—Commotions among the savages—Tummeatapam—Arrival at Astoria.**

We now come to the history of Mr. Clarke and his party, whom we left at the forks in August last, on his way to his winter-quarters at Spokane. Having proceeded up the South-branch, or Louis River, for about fifty miles, he reached the Catatouch band, at the mouth of the Pavilion River. The Catatouches are a small and friendly tribe of the great Nez Percé nations, and the lowest of them on the South-branch. This spot terminated Mr. Clarke's voyage by water. From thence his route lay across land to the Spokane River, distant about 170 miles. Leaving his canoes under the care of the friendly Catatouch chief, he purchased horses from the Indians for the transportation of his goods.

Mr. Clarke had four clerks with him, Messrs. Pillet, Farnham, M'Lennan, and Cox. He had also more men and merchandize than any of the other parties, as it was supposed he would have most to do in opposing a formidable opposition.

Having purchased a sufficient number of horses, he left the Pavilion on the 10th of August, and set out on his journey by land. He had not proceeded far, however, when he got into some little difficulties with his people. They had started together; but before they had been two hours on the march, some of them lagged so far behind that the motley cavalcade outstretched a mile in length; while Mr. Clarke, like a general at the head of an army, had to keep riding backwards and forwards to keep together the broken line of stragglers, the greater part of whom being on foot, and having to keep up with horses, over a barren and sandy plain, in the hot and sultry weather of a Columbia summer, had a task too severe, perhaps, even for the best travellers.

The most refractory of the rear-guard was Mr. Cox—the little Irishman, as he was generally called. Mr. Clarke riding back ordered him, in an angry tone, to quicken his steps. "Give me a horse," said Cox, "and I'll ride with yourself at the head." At this reply Mr. Clarke raised his whip—some say he put his threats in execution—and then rode off. Be that as it may, Cox slunk off and took to the mountains; the party moved on, and Cox remained behind. The sixth day the party arrived at Spokane. Indians were then sent out in all directions; but it was the seventh day after the party had reached its destination before Cox made his appearance. The Indians had picked him up in a most destitute and forlorn condition on the thirteenth day of his wayward pilgrimage; his clothes all torn, his feet bare, and his belly empty. When I was there in the winter, Cox had hardly recovered yet. Mr. Clarke's mode of trading might do for a bourgeois; but it was not fit for a clerk. What was considered moderate at Spokane would be denounced as exorbitant at Oakinacken. Mr. Clarke was extravagant; but to be called by the Indians a generous chief was his greatest glory.

Mr. Clarke established himself at the corner of the opposition post; and being formerly a North-Wester himself, he was up to the rigs of his opponents. The Indians were assembled, long speeches were made, and mighty things were promised on both sides, but never fulfilled. As soon as Mr. Clarke had got himself and property under shelter, following the North-West system, he gave a grand ball to his men, and appointed three or four of the most conceited and blustering fellows in his party to be a guard, such as the Sioux and other savage nations employ as instruments of tyranny in the hands of despotic chiefs. These fellows wore feathers in their caps, the insignia of their office. To challenge, fight, and bully their opponents, stand at the heels of their bourgeois, to be ready at a wink to do whatever he commands them, is their duty; and they understand it well. All these preliminary steps being taken, Mr. Clarke set about establishing outposts, to compete with his opponents and keep them in check.

Mr. Pillet, with some men and a supply of goods, was sent to the Cootanais to oppose Mr. Mantour on the part of the North-West. Mr. Pillet travelled a great deal, and turned his time to good account. Both were zealous traders, and they could fight a duel as well as buy a skin, for they carried pistols as well as goods along with them. They therefore fought and traded alternately, but always spared the thread of life, and in the spring parted good friends.

Mr. Farnham was fitted out for the Selish, or Flathead tribe—crossed with them the Rocky Mountains—visited the head waters of the Missouri—saw much of the country, and made a good trade. Farnham was a bustling, active, and enterprizing fellow.

Both the Cootanais and Selish tribes live and range along the foot of the mountains, often crossing them, and have frequent rencounters with the Blackfeet, by whom they have suffered greatly of late years; the Blackfeet being too numerous for them.

Mr. M'Lennan was stationed at the Pointed Hearts, or Sketch-hugh Lake. In going to his destination, he was rather unlucky, for his canoe upset in crossing the lake, and swamped his goods; but he swam like a fish, got the two men he had with him into the canoe again, then kept diving like a seal, although the weather was cold and the water deep, till he recovered the most of his property: his exertions on this occasion astonished every one who knew the difficulties of the task. M'Lennan was hardy as steel, and bold as a lion: he made a very good and a very cheap trade, and was altogether a favourite among the Indians.

Spring now drawing nigh, Mr. Clarke got in all his outposts and scouts, and left Spokane, with thirty-two horses loaded with furs, on the 25th of May: a confidential man, named Pion, a newly-promoted clerk, with three men, was left in charge of the post. The party performed the journey across land to the Pavilion in six days, and found the canoes, which had been left there in charge of the Catatouch chief, all safe.

The most trivial incidents sometimes prove instructive, and may in their consequences afford an important lesson. As soon as Mr. Clarke arrived at the Pavilion, and found his canoes safe, pleased at the conduct of the chief, he made him a present of some ammunition and tobacco; this done, they set about packing up the different articles in order to embark, and among others two silver goblets belonging to Mr. Clarke himself, who took this opportunity of showing them to the chief, and expatiated on their high value; then pouring a little wine into one of them made the chief drink out of it, telling him when done that he was a greater man now than ever he was before. The chief was delighted, and turning the goblet over and over in his hands, and looking at it with intense interest, handed it over to the next great man, and he to another, and so on till, like the pipe of peace, it had gone round the whole circle. The precious curiosity was then laid by, and the Indians retired.

Next morning, however, the pearl of great price was gone! everything in and about the camp was turned topsy-turvy in search of the silver goblet, but to no purpose: all business was now suspended—the goblet must be found. At last it was conjectured the Indians must have stolen it; and Mr. Clarke, with fury in his countenance, assembled the whole Catatouch camp, and made known his loss—the loss of his silver goblet! he coaxed, he flattered, he threatened to bring down vengeance upon the whole tribe for the loss of his goblet, and, in his wrath and vexation, denounced death upon the offender should he be discovered. The poor Indians stood gazing in amazement; they sympathized with him, pitied him, and deplored his loss, and promised to do their utmost to find the goblet: with this solemn declaration they went off, the whole tribe was called together, the council sat, and soon afterwards they returned in a body, like messengers of peace, bringing the glad tidings to Mr. Clarke that the silver goblet was found; at the same time the chief, stepping forward and spreading out his robe, laid the precious vessel before him. "Where is the thief?" vociferated Mr. Clarke. The chief then pointed to a fellow sitting in the ring as the criminal. "I swore," said Mr. Clarke, "that the thief should die, and white men never break their word." The fellow was told of his fate; but he kept smiling, thinking himself, according to Indian custom, perfectly safe; for the moment the stolen article is returned to the rightful owner, according to the maxims of Indian law, the culprit is exonerated. Mr. Clarke, however, thought otherwise, and, like Herod of old, for the sake of his oath considered himself bound to put his threat into execution, and therefore instantly commanded the poor, unsuspecting wretch to be hung up—and hung he was accordingly; and the unhallowed deed was aggravated by the circumstance of their taking the poles of his own lodge to make the gallows.

The Indians all the time could not believe that the whites were in earnest, till they beheld the lifeless body. The deed was, however, no sooner committed than Mr. Clarke grew alarmed. The chief, throwing down his robe on the ground, a sign of displeasure, harangued his people, who immediately after mounted their fleetest horses, and scampered off in all directions to circulate the news and assemble the surrounding tribes, to take vengeance on the whites. In the mean time, leaving the enraged Indians to follow their inclination, the canoes were thrown into the water, loaded, and down the current Mr. Clarke and his men pushed their way day and night till they reached the Walla Walla, where they arrived safe on the 4th of June; and here we shall leave them for the present, while we detail M'Kenzie's winter adventures. Fortunately for the whites, the defunct Indian was a person of very low degree, even in the estimation of the Indians themselves, being an outcast without friends or relatives, which made them less bent on revenge, but not the less disposed to annoy, as we shall have occasion to notice hereafter.

Mr. M'Kenzie and party before mentioned accompanied Mr. Clarke up the South-branch as far as the Pavilion: here Clarke and his party forked off for Spokane in August, leaving M'Kenzie to prosecute his voyage up the same river till he reached the very centre of the Great Shahaptain, or Nez Percé nation, where he established himself for the winter. By way of clearing up some points not very intelligible to many, we may here mention that the Great Snake River, Louis River, South-branch, Shahaptain River, and Nez Percé River, are all one and the same stream, with different denominations.

As soon as M'Kenzie had got his goods safe under cover, he sent off Mr. Reed, at the head of a small party, to bring the *caches* of goods left by Mr. Hunt to his own post. On his way, he picked up seven of the Canadians belonging to the trapping parties fitted out by Mr. Hunt on his land expedition: these were, Dubreuil, Carson, the gunsmith, Delaunay, St. Michel, Turcotte, Landrie, and La Chapelle, the blacksmith. Some of these fellows, despairing of ever reaching the Columbia, and no doubt thinking the *caches* would be lost, went, accompanied by a band of the Snakes, and rifled several of them; and what they did not take was destroyed by the rains, the wolves, and other animals: some, however, had not been touched, and these Mr. Reed and his party carried off with them to M'Kenzie's post, which place they reached at the end of thirty-five days.

On questioning the wanderers, the true story of the *cache* robbery came out; for M'Kenzie learned from Turcotte and La Chapelle, that, having lost their horses by a marauding party of Blackfeet, and being otherwise destitute, they, in company with Landrie, meditated a descent upon the *caches* in order to supply their wants, and took the Snakes along with them as a safeguard; with their share of the spoil they purchased more horses, then following the Snakes to the Buffalo, they were again surprised by the Blackfeet, lost their horses and everything else, and were left as poor, if not poorer, than before. Filled with remorse, they promised to live honest men the rest of their lives.

M'Kenzie now began to learn the true character of the Indians about him. Their occupations were war and buffalo-hunting. Their country did not abound in furs, nor would men accustomed to an indolent and roving life submit to the drudgery of killing beavers. They spurned the idea of crawling about in search of furs; "Such a life," they said, "was only fit for women and slaves." They were, moreover, insolent and independent. I say independent, because their horses procured them guns and ammunition; the buffaloes provided them with food and clothing; and war gave them renown. Such men held out but poor prospects to the fur-trader; so that M'Kenzie soon got sick of them, and weary of the place. He then equipped the seven Snake wanderers, and sent them out to trap beaver; but they had to go to the mountains, and on their way thither the Indians annoyed them, stole their traps, and frightened them back again to the post. M'Kenzie then resolved to abandon that post, and proceed further up the river; but before taking this step, he went over to Spokane to visit Mr. Clarke; and while there, Mr. John George M'Tavish, a partner of the North-West Company, arrived with a strong reinforcement of men and goods from the east side of the mountains, bringing an account of the war between Great Britain and the United States. On receiving this unwelcome news, M'Kenzie hastened back to his post; but instead of removing further up, as he had contemplated, he put his goods in *cache*, and set off with all his men for Astoria, where he arrived on the 15th of January 1813.

M'Kenzie was dismayed on reaching Astoria to find that the *Beaver* had not returned. M'Dougall and M'Kenzie, weighing circumstances, concluded that all was hopeless. The North-West Company now strong in numbers and well supplied with goods; the *Tonquin* lost, and the *Beaver* not returned, nor any account of her; add to these untoward circumstances, the declaration of war. In this gloomy state of things, M'Kenzie and M'Dougall were of opinion that prompt measures should be adopted for abandoning the undertaking altogether, and that ways and means should be concerted to remove the furs and goods at Astoria into the interior, to be out of the way in case of British ships of war entering the river.

On the 2nd of February, M'Kenzie turned his face towards the interior; and in two canoes, with eighteen men, pushed on to his post, having letters from M'Dougall pointing out the actual state of things, and informing Messrs. Clarke and Stuart of the resolution entered into between himself and M'Kenzie for abandoning the enterprize early in the spring. Messrs. Stuart and Clarke, however, viewed things in a different light, and condemned the proposed step as premature.

On his way up, Mr. M'Kenzie met two North-West canoes sweeping down the current. In these were M'Tavish, two clerks, and twenty men, on their way to the mouth of the Columbia, to meet the far-famed ship *Isaac Todd*, destined for that part. On the twenty-second day after leaving Astoria, Mr. M'Kenzie arrived at his post on the Shahaptain River; but was mortified to find his *cache* robbed.

The Indians indicated their guilt by their shyness, for scarcely one of them came to visit the trader. M'Kenzie therefore summoned the chiefs, and they appeared, expecting no doubt to receive something. When they were all seated, he opened the business of the *cache*, and demanded the goods; adding, that if they were given up, friendship would again be restored. But they all, with one accord, denied having any knowledge of, or hand in, the pillage or robbery. They admitted the fact of the robbery, but denied that they were in any way accessory to it. They regretted the misconduct of their young men; but the goods were now gone, and they could do nothing; and so the conference ended. Seeing that the chiefs would not assist to recover the stolen property, and that every hour's delay lessened the chance of regaining it, M'Kenzie at once resolved on a bold and hazardous step; namely, to dash into the heart of the Indian camp, and recover what he could. Accordingly next morning, after depositing in a safe place the few articles he had brought with him, he and his little band, armed *cap-à-pie*, set out on foot for the camp. On their approach, the Indians, suspecting something, turned out in groups here and there, also armed. But M'Kenzie, without a moment's hesitation, or giving them time to reflect, ordered Mr. Seaton, who commanded the men, to surround the first wigwam or lodge reached with charged bayonets, while he himself and Mr. Reed entered the lodge, ransacked it, turning everything topsy-turvy, and with their drawn daggers cutting and ripping open everything that might be supposed to conceal the stolen property. In this manner they went from one lodge to another till they had searched five or six with various success, when the chiefs demanded a parley, and gave M'Kenzie to understand that if he desisted they would do the business themselves, and more effectually. M'Kenzie, after some feigned reluctance, at last agreed to the chiefs' proposition. They then asked him to withdraw; but this he peremptorily refused, knowing from experience that they were least exposed in the camp; for Indians are always averse to hostilities taking place in their camp, in the midst of their women and children. Had the Indians foreseen or been aware of the intention of the whites, they would never have allowed them within their camp. But they were taken by surprise, and that circumstance saved the whites. However, as soon as the chiefs undertook the business, M'Kenzie and his men stood still and looked on. The chiefs went from house to house, and after about three hours time they returned, bringing with them a large portion of the property, and delivered it to M'Kenzie, when he and his men left the camp and returned home, bearing off in triumph the fruits of their valour; and well pleased with their hairbreadth adventure; an adventure not to be repeated. And under all circumstances, it was at the time considered the boldest step ever taken by the whites on Columbian ground.

This dispute with the Indians led to others; and if the whites got the upper hand in the late affair, the Indians were determined to be even with them in another way—for not a single horse would they sell, and on horse-flesh M'Kenzie and his men had to depend. On this head various conferences took place between the parties, and higher prices than usual were tendered; but the chiefs were inexorable. They had resolved either to drive the whites off their country altogether, or make them pay the most extravagant prices. The object of the whites in delaying their departure was to procure horses, which would be absolutely required in the event of Messrs. Stuart and Clarke acceding to the views of M'Dougall and M'Kenzie; but the Indians, free and independent as the air they breathed or the wind that blew, could not brook the restraint which the whites were always affecting to exercise over them. After some little time, all intercourse between the parties was at an end; not an Indian was to be seen about M'Kenzie's camp, except by stealth in the night, to beg, curry favour, or carry reports, yet five of these secret spies were always kept in pay by M'Kenzie to watch the motions of the Indians, and through them he knew every move in the hostile camp.

At this time one of the spies reported that the

Indians had plotted together to starve M'Kenzie into terms, or drive him off altogether. M'Kenzie, on his part, had recourse to a stratagem to bring them to terms. Both were on the alert. When the whites had nothing to eat, the articles usually paid for a horse were tied up in a bundle; that done, M'Kenzie, with ten or twelve of his men, would sally forth with their rifles to the grazing grounds of the horses, shoot the fattest they could find, and carry off the flesh to their camp; leaving the price stuck upon a pole alongside the head of the dead horse.

This manœuvre succeeded several times, and annoyed the Indians very much; some of them lost their best horses by it. Then it was that they combined to attack the whites in their camp. This news was brought M'Kenzie by one of his hired spies, and was confirmed by the fact of an Indian offering to sell a horse for powder and ball only. From various other suspicious circumstances, there remained but little doubt on the minds of the whites but that there was some dark design in agitation. In this critical conjuncture, M'Kenzie again eluded their grasp by ensconcing himself and his party in an island in the middle of the river. There they remained, in a manner blockaded by the Indians; but not so closely watched but that they appeared every now and then with their long rifles among the Shahaptain horses; so that the Indians grew tired of their predatory excursions, and therefore sent a messenger to M'Kenzie. A parley ensued between the main land

and the island; the result of which was, that the Indians agreed to sell horses to the whites at the usual price—the whites, on their part, to give up their marauding practices.

Notwithstanding this formal treaty, the whites did not put implicit faith in their Indian allies, nor deem it prudent to leave the island; but the trade in horses went on briskly, and without interruption, M'Kenzie getting all his wants supplied. He bought, besides, an extra reserve of eighty horses for contingencies, which he sent off to Spokane; and on the return of his men he left the island, apparently on good terms with the Indians, and reached the Walla Walla, to join his associates, on the 1st of June.

When we reached the Walla Walla on the 30th of May, as already mentioned, we were at a loss to account for the unusual movement and stir among the Indians, who seemed to be assembling from all quarters in great haste. The mystery was, however, soon cleared up when Mr. Clarke joined us, and related the affair of the silver goblet at the Catatouch camp. What did Stuart and M'Kenzie say? What could any man say? The reckless deed had been committed, and Clarke's countenance fell when the general voice of disapprobation was raised against him. The Indians all along kept flying to and fro, whooping and yelling in wild commotion. At this time, Tummeatapam came riding up to our camp at full speed. "What have you done, my friends?" called out the old and agitated chief. "You have spilt blood on our lands!"

Then pointing to a cloud of dust raised by the Indians, who were coming down upon us in wild confusion —" There, my friends, do you see them? What can I do?" The chief did not dismount, but wheeling round his horse again, off he went like a shot, leaving us to draw a salutary inference from the words "What can I do?"—meaning, no doubt, that we had better be off immediately. Taking the hint, we lost no time. Tents were struck; some had breakfasted, some not—kettles and dishes were all huddled together and bundled into the canoe, and, embarking pell-mell, we pushed with all haste from the inauspicious shore. We pushed our way down the current, passing the falls, the narrows, and the cascades, without the least interruption, and arrived safe at Astoria on the 14th day of June. And here we shall leave the party to recount to each other their various exploits, while we take up the thread of Mr. Stuart's adventures from Columbia to St. Louis.

# CHAPTER XIV.

**Mr. Stuart—Snake River—Trappers—Joyous meeting—Trappers' resolution—Crow Indians' troubles—Horses change masters—Mr. Stuart on foot—M'Lellan left alone—Hardships of the party—Famine—Le Clerc's horrid proposition—The old bull—The old horse — Pilot-knobs — Winter quarters — Unwelcome visitors — Change of quarters—Spring—Travelling at random—An Otto-Indian—River Platte—Two traders—News of the war—The Missouri—The old horse given for an old canoe—St. Louis—Mr. Astor—Wallamitte—Falls—Scenery—Habits of the Col-lap-poh-yea-ass tribes — Concourse of savages — M'Dougall's letter — M'Kenzie's stratagem—Indian disappointment—The ship *Beaver* —Coasting voyage—Mr. Astor's policy—Captains—Their instructions—Mr. Hunt baulked in his plans—The Boston merchants—Mr. Astor's conduct—Difficulties of Mr. Hunt's situation—The ship *Albatross*—All the parties at head-quarters.**

When we left Mr. Stuart on the 31st of July last, he had then just mounted his horse on his journey across land for St. Louis; we now propose keeping him company, and will make such remarks during his perilous route as barren, wild, and savage hordes may from time to time suggest.

From Walla Walla the party journeyed onwards, first over the open plains, and next across the Blue

Mountains, till at length they fell on the Great Snake River, along which they occasionally continued their route for many days without any interesting occurrence till the 20th of August, when they, by mere chance, stumbled on Mr. Miller, and three of the beaver-trappers, Hoback, Resner, and Robinson, fitted out by Mr. Hunt.

It will be remembered that Mr. Miller abruptly left Mr. Hunt and party to join one of the trapping parties. The joy manifested by both parties at meeting was, as might be expected, the most cordial and lively. They swore that they had met to part no more till they parted in that land which had given them birth. So Mr. Miller and his prodigal children joined Mr. Stuart with the determination to follow him to St. Louis. These wanderers had been twice robbed by the Indians, had exhausted their strength, wasted their means, and saved nothing; and seemed on the present occasion quite overjoyed and happy at the prospect of once more returning to their native homes. Yet what will the reader think when he is told that only eight days after all these fine resolutions, they again expressed a wish to remain where they were, and try their fortune once more in the wilderness! Strange infatuation! Change of climate seldom makes a change of character. Mr. Stuart reasoned with them, but in vain; and at last, seeing them resolved, he supplied them with a new and full equipment of everything they wanted. So the parties separated; Mr. Miller following Mr. Stuart and his party, while the other three trappers bade them farewell, and stayed behind.

On the 7th of September they left the Great Snake River, and entered the defiles of the mountains. Here they met some saucily-disposed Crow Indians; but they got clear of them without harm, and Mr. Stuart continued his toilsome journey, winding his way among the rugged and rapid streams near the source of the Great Snake River to which they drew near again, in the hopes of avoiding the Crows; but it mattered little what course they steered, or what direction they took, the Crows were everywhere at their heels; and in front provisions were also scarce, and the party were now much reduced by hunger and fatigue.

On the 19th, early in the morning, the Crows, like a Scythian horde, dashed on their little camp, giving the Indian war-whoop, and swept all their horses off in a moment. This misfortune left them in an awful plight. They stood motionless and hopeless. They had now to turn over a new leaf, and from mounted cavalry, to become foot soldiers. They now set about making up each man's load, and what they could not carry they destroyed on the spot rather than let any of it fall into the hands of their implacable enemies, for their every movement was now watched with an eagle's eye by the Indians on the heights. To avoid, therefore, the hostile Crows, they had to shun the buffalo, and run the risk of starving or of going right into the jaws of the Blackfeet; but there was no alternative, and to lessen the evil as much as possible they bent their course northward, through a country, in Mr. Stuart's own words, "more fit for goats than men;" and so closely were they watched by the savages, that they could not venture to separate for the purpose of hunting. They had likewise to keep watch by night, and were every moment in danger of being surrounded or waylaid in the narrow and intricate defiles through which they had to pass.

Yet these trying circumstances, when danger stared them in the face, failed to unite them together in heart and hand. Mr. M'Lellan, with a fool-hardiness and wayward disposition peculiar to himself, left the party in a pet, nor was it till the tenth day afterwards that he was picked up, lying in his cheerless and forlorn encampment, without fire or food, and reduced through hunger, fatigue, and cold to a mere skeleton. Always perverse and stubborn, he had now become peevish and sullen, yet in this torpid and reduced state he revived on seeing his friends, became cheerful, and joyfully joined the party again; but being unable to carry anything, or even to walk, the party halted for two days that he might recruit a little, and then his rifle, pistols, and other things being carried by the others, the party set forward on their journey. They wandered about for five days and nights without a mouthful to eat, and were now reduced to the last extremity; nor had they strength to make use of their rifles, although now and then some deer were seen.

On the 1[illegible]th of October, the sixth day of their fasting, just as the party had halted for the night, Le Clerc, one of the Canadians, proposed to cast lots, saying, "It is better one should die than that all should perish." Mr. Stuart reproved him severely; and as the fellow stood haggard and wild before him, with his rifle in his hand, he ordered the others to wrest it from his grasp. A watch was kept all night, nor did Mr. Stuart himself close an eye. During this scene, M'Lellan, scarcely able to move, kept eyeing Le Clerc all the time, and looking round for his rifle; but Mr. Stuart had put it out of the way. Next day, however, Providence directed their forlorn steps to an old and solitary buffalo-bull, which they managed to kill, and this fortunate rencontre saved their lives.

On the 18th, the wanderers fell in with a straggling camp of Snakes, from whom they purchased a sorry old horse, the only one the ruffian Crows had left with them. This horse appeared in their eyes a prize of no small value. With him they set out, not a little cheered and comforted by the two lucky acquisitions—the old bull and the old horse. Our party were then wandering between the lofty Pilot-knobs and the head-waters of the Missouri; but far from the latter. They now kept veering more to the east, and advancing irregularly, as the valleys and ravines opened a road for them to pass, till the snow and cold weather precluded all hopes of getting much farther for this season, so that they began to look out for a place of security, and rest from their fatigues.

On the 2nd of November they pitched their camp for winter; built a log-hut, and the buffalo being plenty, and the party tolerably recovered in strength, they soon laid in an ample stock of provisions; but in the wilderness all plans are precarious, hopes delusive. Our friends had not been long in their comfortable quarters before they were pestered with unwelcome visitors, for a war party of Arapahays discovered their retreat, and annoyed them so much that they thought it best to look out for some other quarters, more secluded and secure.

On the 13th of December they abandoned their dwelling with infinite regret, and setting out through deep snows, over a rugged and inhospitable country, they travelled for fifteen days, when a bleak and boundless plain presented itself before them. Here they held a consultation. The plain before them, destitute both of animals and firewood, appeared like an ocean of despair. The more they reflected, the more awful did their situation appear. At last they retraced their wearied steps for about eighty miles, and took up a second position.

On the 30th of December they again pitched their winter camp, built a house, laid in a stock of food, and found themselves once more in comfortable quarters. In this last retreat the Indians did not find them out, and there they awaited the return of spring.

On the 20th of March they broke up their winter-quarters, and in two canoes, made during the winter, they essayed to push their way down a broad but shoal river. In this, however, they failed, and leaving their canoes they took to land again with their old but faithful Snake-horse. All this time they were wandering in hopes of reaching some known branch of the Missouri: for they had lost their way, and did not know where they were for the last three months.

On the 1st of April the party fell in with an Indian of the Otto tribe. This stranger gave them to understand that they were then treading on the banks of the River Platte, and not far from white men. The same Indian then conducted them to Messrs. Dornin and Roi, two Indian traders, established in that quarter. From these gentlemen Mr. Stuart got the first news of the war between Great Britain and the States; and they also undertook to furnish him with a canoe for the voyage down the Missouri, in exchange for the old and faithful Snake-horse.

On the 16th they all embarked, and after descending about fifty miles on the River Platte they found themselves on the broad and majestic Missouri, down which with buoyant spirits they now pushed their way, without accident or interruption, till they reached St. Louis on the 30th of April. Mr. Stuart lost no time in acquainting Mr. Astor with his safe arrival at that place with despatches from Columbia, and that the success and prospect of affairs there were such as to warrant the most flattering results.

The information conveyed by Mr. Stuart was hailed by Mr. Astor as a sure presage of future prosperity: and, in his exultation, he said, "That will do; I have hit the nail on the head." Mr. Stuart's journey with so small a party, across a region so distant, wild, and hostile, was fraught with many perils and privations. During the period of ten long months, he was never free from danger and anxiety. The eventual success of that expedition, so often reduced to extremities, reflects great credit on him who conducted it. Leaving now Mr. Stuart to enjoy himself among his friends at St. Louis, we shall go back to Columbia again to see what has been doing in the Wallamitte quarter.

The Wallamitte quarter has always been considered by the whites as the garden of the Columbia, particularly in an agricultural point of view, and certain animals of the chace; but in the article of beaver, the great staple commodity of the Indian trader, several other places, such as the Cowlitz, Blue Mountains, and She Whaps, equal, if not surpass it. In the spring of 1812, Mr. M'Kenzie had penetrated some hundred miles up the Wallamitte River, but more with the view of exploring the southern quarter, seeing the Indians, and studying the topography of the country, than for the purpose of procuring beaver. This year another party, fitted out by M'Dougall on a beaver-trading excursion, spent some months in that quarter, among the Col-lap-poh-yea-ass. These parties penetrated nearly to the source of the Wallamitte, a distance of five hundred miles. It enters the Columbia by two channels, not far distant from each other; the most westerly is the main branch, and is distant from Cape Disappointment from eighty to ninety miles, following the course of the river. The Wallamitte lies in the direction of south and north, and runs parallel with the sea-coast; that is, its source lies south and its course north. In ascending the river the surrounding country is most delightful, and the first barrier to be met with is about forty miles up from its mouth.

Here the navigation is interrupted by a ledge of rocks running across the river from side to side, in the form of an irregular horse-shoe, over which the whole body of water falls at one leap down a precipice of about forty feet, called the Falls. To this place, and no farther, the salmon ascend, and during the summer months they are caught in great quantities. At this place, therefore, all the Indians throughout the surrounding country assemble, gamble, and gormandize for months together. From the mouth of the Wallamitte up to the falls it is navigable for boats only, and from the falls to its source for canoes, and it is sufficiently deep for the ordinary purposes of the Indian trader. The banks of the river throughout are low, and skirted in the distance by a chain of moderately high lands on each side, interspersed here and there with clumps of wide-spreading oaks, groves of pine, and a variety of other kinds of wood. Between these high lands, lie what is called the Valley of the Wallamitte, the frequented haunts of innumerable herds of elk and deer.

The natives are very numerous and well disposed; yet they are an indolent and sluggish race, and live exceedingly poor in a very rich country. When our people were travelling there, the moment the report of a gun was heard forth came the natives; men, women, and children would follow the sound like a swarm of bees, and feast and gormandize on the offal of the game, like so many vultures round a dead carcass; yet every Indian has his quiver full of arrows, and few natives are more expert with the bow. The names of the different tribes, beginning at the mouth of the river and taking them in succession as we ascend, may be ranged in the following order:—Wa-come-app, Naw-moo-it, Chilly-Chandize, Shook-any, Coupé, She-hees, Long-tongue-buff, La-malle, and Pee-you tribes; but as a great nation they are known under the general name of Col-lap-poh-yea-ass, and are governed by four principal chiefs. The most eminent and powerful goes by the name of Key-ass-no. The productiveness of their country is, probably, the chief cause of their extreme apathy and indolence; for it requires so little exertion to provide for their wants, that even that little is not attended to; they are honest and harmless, yet there is a singular mixture of simplicity and cunning about them. The river, towards its head-waters, branches out into numerous little streams, which rise in the mountains. There is also another fine river near the source of the Wallamitte; but lying rather in the direction of east and west, called the Imp-qua; this river empties itself into the ocean. The finest hunting-ground on the Wallamitte is towards the Imp-qua. There beaver is abundant, and the party that went there to trade this year made handsome returns; but the Indians throughout are so notoriously lazy that they can hardly be prevailed upon to hunt or do anything else that requires exertion.

Yet, with all their apathy and inertness, we find that they can be roused into action; for while M'Kenzie was visiting their country, a slight quarrel took place between some of them and a white man, named Jervais, at the Wa-come-app village. Jervais had beaten one of the Indians, which gave great offence to the tribe; and they had been muttering threats in consequence. M'Dougall, hearing of the circumstance, sent off a letter to apprize M'Kenzie, that he might keep a good look-out on his way back, as the Indians intended to intercept or waylay him. M'Kenzie arrived at the hostile camp, situate at the mouth of the Wallamitte, crossed to the opposite or north side of the Columbia, and then went on shore, without in the least suspecting what was going on, although he had remarked once or twice to his people, the unusual multitude of Indians collected together, and their bold and daring appearance; and also that Key-ass-no, the chief, had not come to see them. On his way up, M‘Kenzie had left his boat at the falls till his return, and now took it down with him. While he was revolving in his mind those suspicious appearances, one of a neighbouring tribe slipped into his hand, privately, M‘Dougall’s letter. The moment he read the letter he was convinced of his critical situation, and whispered to his men to be ready to embark at a moment’s warning. But, behold, the tide had left his boat high and dry on the beach. What was now to be done? Always fertile, however, in expedients, he feigned the greatest confidence in the Indians, and at the same time adopted a stratagem to deceive them. He told them he had some thoughts of building among them, and would now look out for a suitable site; for which reason, he said, he would stay with them for the night, and requested them to prepare a good encampment for him, which they immediately set about doing. This threw the Indians off their guard, as they could then accomplish their purpose more effectually, and with less risk. This manœuvre had the desired effect. Some of the Indians were busied in clearing the encampment; others he amused in looking out for a place to build, till the following tide set his boat afloat again; then taking advantage of it, he and his men instantly embarked and pushed before the current, leaving the Indians in painful disappointment, gazing at one another. Next morning they arrived safe among their friends at Astoria.

Before we close the account of this year's campaign, we must take up the subject of the ship *Beaver*, Capt. Sowle, from New York, with the annual supplies, who arrived at Astoria, as we have before noticed, on the 9th of May, after a voyage of 212 days. The *Beaver* remained at the infant establishment of Astoria till the 4th of August. On the 6th, she crossed the bar with some difficulty, having grounded twice, which so frightened old Sowle, the captain, that he was heard to say "I'll never cross you again." Having cleared the bar, she left the Columbia on a three months' cruise along the coast, towards the Russian settlements at Kamtschatka, intending to be back again about the latter end of October, and as had been settled upon in the council of partners. Mr. Hunt was on board. It may, however, be easily inferred that this was a part of Astor's general plan, that the man at the head of affairs should accompany the ship on her coasting trip. It was so with the *Tonquin*, as well as with the *Beaver*; and this again goes far too prove how little Astor cared about the Columbia, or those carrying on the business there, when the man at the head of the establishment was liable to be removed from his important charge, and sent as a peddling supercargo on board the ship, merely for the purpose of receiving a few seal-skins from old Count Baranhoff, at Kamtschatka. This, as I have already said, was done by Astor's orders; for he, in his arm-chair at New York, regulated all the springs of action at

Astoria, just as if he had been on the spot. Work well, work ill, his commands remained like the laws of the Medes and Persians: there was no discretionary power left to alter them.

The ship, therefore, with Mr. Hunt on board, reached her destination without any accident or delay; visited New Archangel, Sitka, and St. Paul's, taking in at these places a valuable cargo of furs, chiefly seal-skins; but was detained in these boisterous seas much longer than had been calculated upon, for she had not left the most northern of these parts, which is St. Paul's, before the beginning of November.

And here we have another instance of that fatal policy pursued by Astor in giving to his captains powers which made them independent of the consignees. This was the case with Captain Thorn, who left what he pleased, and carried off what he pleased; and when M'Dougall and the other parties remonstrated with him for leaving the infant colony so bare, he put his hand in his pocket and produced his instructions from Astor, which at once shut their mouths. The same game was now played by Captain Sowle. Mr. Hunt could not prevail upon him, on his way back from the Russian settlements, to touch at Columbia; and when Mr. Hunt threatened to remove him and give the command to another, he then, as Captain Thorn had done before him, produced his private instructions from Mr. Astor, justifying his proceedings; for after Mr. Hunt's arrival at Columbia, he often repeated, in the anguish of his soul, that "the underhand policy of Astor and the conduct of his captains had ruined the undertaking." In this perplexing situation, Mr. Hunt had to submit, and Captain Sowle, spreading his canvass, steered for the Sandwich Islands direct, carrying Mr. Hunt, like a prisoner, along with him. From the Sandwich Islands, the *Beaver* sailed for Canton, in the first week of January 1813; a serious loss to Astor, and the ruin of Astoria.

It was a part of Mr. Astor's general plan to supply the Russian factories along the coast with goods; and it would appear, from the conduct of his captains, that to this branch of the undertaking he devoted his chief attention; reserving for them the choicest part of all his cargoes, and for Columbia the mere refuse. This alone gave great umbrage to the partners at Astoria; it soured their dispositions to see many articles which they stood in need of pass by their door.

While at Woahoo, Mr. Hunt heard some faint rumours of the war, but nothing certain. The Boston merchants had, at a great expense, fitted out, it was said, a despatch ship for the Pacific, in order to apprise the coasting vessels there of the declaration of war. But Mr. Hunt could gain no certain information on that head; because Astor had not contributed his mite towards the expense of fitting out the vessel, they were determined not to let the least hint of it reach Hunt, who was therefore left in the dark.

Can anything point out in a clearer light Astor's indifference about the fate of his little devoted colony at Columbia, than his not joining the Boston merchants, or taking any steps whatever to apprise the Astorians of the war?

In the mean time, Mr. Hunt waited at the Sandwich Islands, in the hope that another annual ship from New York might cast up for the relief of Astoria; but waited in vain. At last, by the arrival of the ship *Albatross*, Captain Smith, from Canton, he was no longer in doubt as to the declaration of war; and this increased his anxiety to get back to Astoria. Chartering, therefore, the ship *Albatross*, he sailed in her, after a ruinous delay, and arrived safe at Astoria on the 20th of August. And this brings the parties once more to Astoria, and closes the transactions of the ye[illegible]

## CHAPTER XV.

**Meeting of the partners—Warm discussion—M'Kenzie—Eloquence of the times—Reasons for dissolving the company—Dissenting partners converted—Final resolve—The deputy's powers—Departure of the brigade—A canoe lost—A man's leg in jeopardy—Rumours at the narrows—Snake party—Rumours renewed—Tummeatapam's counsel—Hostile appearance at the forks—Number of Indians—Nez Percés' fleet—Fears of the whites—Indian visit—Strong guard—Mr. Clarke—Relic of the silver goblet—Mr. Hunt at Astoria—Face of affairs changed—Mr. Hunt departs from Astoria—North-West squadron—A great Eri duped—Bill of sale—Petty manœuvring—Rumours of ships—The Astorians at their post—Bills signed—Astoria delivered up—North-West Company.**

Astoria now became the scene of business and bustle. A council was convened, and a second meeting of the partners took place. Last year their expectations were raised to the highest pitch, and everything promised an abundant harvest of wealth and glory: the present state of affairs was somewhat clouded with reverses and cross-purposes. The resolutions of M'Dougall and M'Kenzie last winter, to abandon the undertaking, were now discussed anew: on the one hand, M'Dougall found great fault with Clarke and Stuart for not taking such steps for leaving the country as were pointed out in the resolutions alluded to; on the other hand, these gentlemen were equally displeased with M'Dougall for having acted, as they considered, prematurely and without their consent. Two days were spent in mutual recrimination: at last M'Kenzie, who had hitherto left both parties to settle the dispute the best way they could, now sided with M'Dougall, and poured forth such a torrent of persuasive eloquence, backed by facts, that the opposite party were reduced to silence.

"Gentlemen," said he, "why do you hesitate so long between two opinions? your eyes ought to have been opened before now to your own interests. In the present critical conjuncture, there is no time to be lost: let us then, by a timely measure, save what we can, lest a British ship of war enter the river and seize all. We have been long enough the dupes of a vacillating policy—a policy which showed itself at Montreal on our first outset, in refusing to engage at once a sufficient number of able hands.

"At Nodowa that policy was equally conspicuous. Did not Astor's private missive to Mr. Hunt at that place give umbrage to all? Did not his private orders to Mr. Hunt to put his nephew, with one scratch of his pen, over the heads of all the clerks in the concern add to that umbrage? Could there be anything more impolitic and unjust? Could there be any measure more at variance with the letter and the spirit of the articles of agreement? Did not his private instructions to his captains annihilate the power and authority of the partners? When the unfortunate *Tonquin* left this, what did she leave behind? did she not, by virtue of Astor's private instructions to her captain, carry everything off that was worth carrying off? Has not the same line of policy been pursued in the case of the *Beaver?* And this year there is no ship at all! Has it not been obvious from the beginning, that under Astor's policy we can never prosper? and, besides, there are other untoward matters over which Mr. Astor had no control, such as the delay of the *Beaver*, the absence of Mr. Hunt, our formidable rivals the North-West Company, and, to crown all, the declaration of war.

"Now, gentlemen, all these inauspicious circumstances taken together point out, in my opinion, the absolute necessity of abandoning the enterprize as soon as possible. We owe it to Astor—we owe it to ourselves; and our authority for adopting such a course is based on the 15th and 16th articles of the copartnership, which authorize us at any time within the period of five years to abandon the undertaking, should it prove impracticable or unprofitable. Not, gentlemen, that there is any fault in the country—no country, as to valuable furs, can hold out better prospects; but Astor's policy, and a chain of misfortunes, have ruined all. Astor, with all his sagacity, either does not or will not understand the business. The system we were bound to follow was had, and that system we cannot alter; so that we are bound in honour to deliver the whole back into the hands from which we received it—and the sooner the better." These representations, stamped with the authority of experience, had the desired effect; the resolution to abandon the country was adopted, and Messrs. Stuart and Clarke gave it their cordial consent: as it was now too late to carry it into execution this year, it was postponed till the next; and the 1st of June was the time fixed upon for our departure.

These preliminary arrangements being now completed, a resolution was signed on the 1st of July, by all the partners present, to dissolve the concern and abandon the enterprize the next year. It was then resolved that Mr. Stuart should betake himself to his post at the She Whaps, and that Mr. Clarke should proceed to Spokane, while Mr. M'Kenzie was to winter on the Wallamitte, with the express understanding that we were all to meet again at Astoria next May, and to take our final departure from that establishment on the 1st of June, unless a new supply should arrive, and peace be concluded before that time. That Mr. Reed, with some hunters and trappers, should pass the winter in the Snake country, collect the stragglers still wandering through that quarter, and at a certain point await the arrival of the main body, and join it on its way across.

Meanwhile, Mr. M'Dougall was still to continue in the command of Astoria until Mr. Hunt's return.

M'Dougall was also empowered, in the event of Mr. Hunt's non-arrival, to treat with Mr. M'Tavish for the transfer of all the goods and furs belonging to the Pacific Fur Company in the country, at certain fixed prices, should that gentleman be disposed to purchase on behalf of the North-West Company, considering a sale of this nature, under all circumstances, to be a safer speculation than the conveyance of so much property across the long and dangerous route to St. Louis. Such were the resolutions passed on the present occasion, and copies of them all were delivered over to M'Tavish, to be forwarded to Mr. Astor by the North-West Company's winter express. The parties then left Astoria for the interior on the 5th of July.

We have now so often related the voyage up and down the Columbia, that on the present occasion it will not be necessary to dwell on minute details; suffice it to say, therefore, that we reached the cascades or first barrier without any remarkable occurrence, till we got opposite to Strawberry Island, where one of the canoes in ascending the rapid, sheered out in the stream, whirled round and round, and upset. With great difficulty and danger the men were saved, but a great deal of property was irrecoverably lost, and, among other things, a box of mine, containing books and mathematical instruments, quadrant, sextant, and a valuable pair of pistols—all went to the bottom. It is a singular fact, that we have never yet once been able to pass this Charybdis without paying tribute either to the natives or the whirlpools: but misfortunes seldom come alone, and to add to the confusion, as we were all running to and fro saving the men's lives and the property, Mr. Cox's gun, being held in some awkward and careless position, went off, and both balls passed through the calf of Mr. Pillet's right leg, but fortunately without breaking the bone.

Proceeding onwards, we passed the long narrows and the Wyampam banditti, for the first time, without any trouble. It was, however, rumoured here that we were to be attacked in passing the forks; that the Indians had assembled there in hostile array. And here Mr. Clarke would fain have avoided the rencounter; he made several attempts, but in vain, to engage a guide to lead him through the interior by a back path. At the Umatallow, the small party bound for the Snake country left us, and departed in the direction of the Blue Mountains.

On reaching the Walla Walla, about six miles from the forks, Tummeatapam made signs for us to go on shore. Here the good old Sachem appeared much agitated, and sat for some time without uttering a single word. At last he broke silence, and exclaimed —"White men! white men!" then pointing to a dark cloud of dust rising near the forks, said, "There they are—there they are!" Then taking up a handful of sand and throwing it in the air, exclaimed again—"They are as numerous as the grains of sand; the Indians have bad hearts: I am hoarse with speaking to them; but they will not listen to me." He advised us earnestly to turn back; but seeing us determined to ascend the river, he asked leave to embark and accompany us: but this we refused. We took him, however, to one of our boats, and showed him a brass four-pounder, some hand-grenades, and sky-rockets; then giving him some tobacco to smoke, we embarked, and crossing over to the right-hand side, pushed on along shore; the Indians being all on the left bank. As we advanced, the Indians, mounted in numerous squadrons, kept flying backwards and forwards, seemingly bent on some great design. We paddled on, however, without a moment's delay, anxious to get to a certain point a little beyond the forks, but on the opposite side of the river, which is here nearly a mile broad. When we came just opposite to the Indians, they all formed into one mass, and could not have been less than two thousand, with a fleet of one hundred and seventy-four canoes along the beach. Their appearance was certainly very imposing and formidable; and the noise of the war-dance and war-song, mingled with whooping and yelling, was terrific. We in the mean time reached the wished-for point, landed, took our stand, fortified our camp, and awaited the threatened attack. This took place in the afternoon, about two hours before sunset. All at once the canoes were launched, and we beheld fifty-seven of them filled with people making for our camp. All was suspense. Every man squatted down with his gun in his hand, and his finger on the trigger. As the fleet approached our anxiety increased, till Mr Stuart, who kept eyeing them all the time with a spy-glass, called out—"There is nothing to fear; there are women and children in the canoes." This was glad news to some of our party, who were more intent on saying their prayers than on fighting. By this time they had got almost close to us, when they all disembarked at the distance of about two hundred yards. Mr. Stuart, advancing to meet them, drew a line on the sand, as much as to say, "Do not pass this": they obeyed—the pipe of peace was smoked, and laid aside. After a short pause, a few harangues were made. They smoked again; a trifling present followed; the business was ended, and at dusk the Indians returned quietly to their camp. We supposed that Tummeatapam's account of our big gun influenced their conduct not a little. Their peaceable behaviour, however, did not altogether quiet our apprehensions; a strong watch was set for the night, and before the morning dawn every man had his gun in his hand; but the Indians had disappeared. This demonstration of the Indians prevented Mr. Clarke from proceeding to his destination by the usual route. He had therefore to continue with us, and pass by Oakinacken for Spokane, making a circuitous route of more than three hundred miles.

From the forks, we proceeded without interruption till we reached Oakinacken on the 15th of August, where I was to winter; and here we shall leave the different parties to proceed to their respective quarters, while we, in the mean time, return back a little to see what is going on at Astoria.

It has already been stated that Mr. Hunt arrived at Astoria, in the ship *Albatross*, on the 20th of August. He was mortified to find, from the resolutions of the 1st of July, that the partners had made up their minds to abandon the country. M'Dougall and M'Kenzie now exerted their reasoning powers to convince Mr. Hunt of their desperate and hopeless situation. Nor could that gentleman, with all his zeal for the interest of Mr. Astor, and the success of his enterprize, shut his eyes or close his ears against facts so self-evident. After weighing, therefore, all the circumstances of our situation, Mr. Hunt acquiesced in the measures that had been taken, and likewise confirmed the powers given to Mr. M'Dougall to transfer the goods and furs to the North-West Company. These points being settled, Mr. Hunt, after remaining a week at Astoria, left the Columbia again in the *Albatross*. This vessel was bound for the Marquesas, and Mr. Hunt took a passage in her with the view of purchasing a ship to carry the furs at Astoria to market, in the event of no transfer being made to the North-West Company, as well as to convey thirty-two Sandwich Islanders, now in the service of the Company, back to their own country; and here I shall take my leave of Mr. Hunt for the present, and return to my post at Oakinacken.

Everything now assumed a calm and tranquil aspect; the dye was cast; we were now but sojourners for a day; the spring would remove us to other scenes, and till then we had to make the best we could of the passing hour. Under this impression, I soothed myself with the hope of passing a quiet winter, thinking at times on our disappointments. After all our labours, all our golden dreams, here is the result! Well might we say, with Solomon, that "all is vanity!" While musing one day on passing events, I was surprised all at once by the arrival of a strong party of North-Westers, seventy-five in number, in a squadron of ten canoes, and headed by Messrs. M'Tavish and Stuart, two North-West bourgeois, on their way to the mouth of the Columbia, in high glee, to meet their ship, the *Isaac Todd*, which was expected daily. Mr. Clarke also accompanied the North-West brigade, on his way to Astoria. With the craft peculiar to Indian traders, they had crammed down Mr. Clarke's throat that nothing could be done at Astoria without him, although his accompanying them was like the third wheel to a cart; but it answered their purpose: for his leaving Spokane threw at once all the trade of the district into their hands, and Mr. Clarke found out, when it was too late, that he had been duped. At Astoria, the party arrived safe on the 7th of October.

Here it was that the negotiation between the two great functionaries, M'Dougall and M'Tavish, commenced. The terms were soon adjusted, and the prices fixed. The whole of the goods on hand, both at Astoria and throughout the interior, were delivered over to the North-West Company, at 10 per cent. on cost and charges. The furs were valued at so much per skin. The whole sales amounted to 80,500 dollars: M'Tavish giving bills of exchange on the agents for the amount, payable in Canada. This transaction took place on the 16th of October, and was considered fair and equitable on both sides.

But, after all, a good deal of petty manœuvring took place, not very creditable to the representative of a great body. M'Tavish expected the armed ship *Isaac Todd*, fitted out as a letter of marque, into the river daily, and in that case Astoria would have been captured as a prize, and become the property of the North-West Company without purchase; and besides, he had learned that the British Government had despatched a ship of war to cruise on the coast of the Pacific, and that she might be looked for hourly; and the moment she entered the river all the American property, as a matter of course, would have been seized as a prize. In either case, M'Tavish would have saved his bills of exchange. Under this impression he put off from time to time, under various pretences, the signing of the documents. M'Dougall and M'Kenzie, however, saw through this piece of artifice, and insisted that the business should be ratified at once. M'Tavish, however, full of commercial wiles, tried to evade and retard every step taken. M'Dougall, in the mean time, had a squadron of boats in readiness, should any suspicious vessel come in sight, to transport the furs and goods up to the Wallamitte out of her reach. While matters were in this unsettled state, Mr. M'Kenzie suggested a decisive measure, which brought the negotiation to a speedy close.

M'Tavish and his party were encamped at the time within a few yards of the fort, and sheltered, as it were, under the protection of our guns. They were also indebted to the generosity of the Astorians for their daily supplies; being themselves without goods, ammunition, or provisions.

One morning before daylight Messrs. M'Dougall and M'Kenzie summoned all hands together, seventy-two in number, and after a brief statement of the views of the North-West in reference to the negotiation, ordered the bastions to be manned, the guns to be loaded and pointed, and the matches lighted. In an instant every man was at his post, and the gates shut. At eight o'clock a message was sent to M'Tavish, giving him two hours, and no more, either to sign the bills or break off the negotiation altogether and remove to some other quarters. By eleven o'clock the bills were finally and formally signed, and Astoria was delivered up to the North-West Company on the 12th of November, after nearly a month of suspense between the drawing and the signing of the bills.

## CHAPTER XVI.

**Mr. Franchere—Comecomly's anxiety—His report of a sail—His attachment to the Americans—Laframboise, the interpreter—Mr. M'Dougall's visit—The *Racoon* sloop-of-war—Comecomly grows partial to the British flag—North-West partners—British officers—Astoria changed to Fort George—Captain Black's character—Mr. Hunt's voyage—Commodore Porter—Mr. Hunt leaves the Marquesas—Arrival at the Sandwich Islands—Rumours—The ship *Lark*—Eight persons perish—Columbian affairs—The property delivered—No ice—The people assembled—Voyage—The Cascade banditti—Two North-West canoes—North-West affray at the cascades—Mr. Stuart wounded—Mr. Keith's conduct—Preparations for war—The great expedition—Conduct of the Cath-le-yach-é-yach Indians—Expedition fails—The effect—Remarks.**

THE fate of unfortunate Astoria being now sealed, and the place in the possession of the North-West Company, the Astorians looked on merely as indifferent spectators. Mr. Franchere was the only clerk in the American service who showed a wish to join the new comers. He was a Canadian from Montreal; and in those days the North-West stood high in Canada, and particularly in Montreal. There they were everything, and the Canadian voyageurs had a liberal share of their bounty. It was therefore natural for him to join that body which was the admiration of his countrymen.

On the 29th of November, Comecomly arrived in great haste at Astoria, with a report that a sail had been seen off the Cape, and expressed great alarm lest it might be a King George ship. He did not wish, he said, to see any more Britons among them. He and his people were fond of the Americans, and would make war against any other people entering the river. The old chief uttered this threat in an angry determined tone. Then turning to M'Dougall, he said, "See those few King George people who come down the river: they were poor; they had no goods, and were almost starving; yet you were afraid of them, and delivered your fort and all your goods to them; and now King George's ships are coming to carry you all off as slaves. We are not afraid of King George's people. I have got eight hundred warriors, and we will not allow them to enslave you. The Americans are our friends and allies." M'Dougall tried to console him, and told him that the British would not hurt the Americans. He also rewarded the chief's devotedness to the American cause with a new suit of clothing; then told him to keep a sharp look-out to discover whether the ship was British or American; forbidding, at the same time, either himself or his people to go on board. This he promised faithfully to do, and went off highly pleased.

The moment Comecomly left Astoria, Laframboise, the interpreter, was called in, decked and painted in the full Chinook costume, and despatched to Cape Disappointment to report whether a vessel was to be seen, and if so, whether British or American. In the mean time, M'Dougall prepared to start the instant a ship was seen. Laframboise had scarcely reached the Cape when the ship hove in sight, and soon afterwards came dashing over the bar in fine style, and anchored in Baker's Bay, within the Cape. Laframboise immediately returned, and on his way back met Mr. M'Dougall, in a boat well manned, going to the ship, and told him that the new arrival was a British ship of war. M'Dougall proceeded, and after remaining for about an hour on board returned to Astoria and reported the vessel to be the *Racoon* British sloop of war, of twenty-six guns, Captain Black, commander.

As soon as M'Dougall had left the *Racoon*, his royal father-in-law, with a squad of followers, repaired to the ship to pay their homage to the British captain. Then the crafty old chief traduced the Americans and extolled the British; expressing his joy that he had lived long enough to see once more a great ship of his brother King George enter the river. Then, with a grin of contempt, he remarked, "The Americans have no ships to be compared to King George's ships." Saying this, he laid a fine sea-otter skin at Captain Black's feet, and prepared to leave the ship. The captain called him back, gave him a good bumper of wine, and in return for so much loyalty presented him with an old flag, a laced coat, cocked hat, and sword. His Chinook majesty then left the *Racoon*, and returned to shore as stanch a Briton as ever he had previously been an American partisan. But the best part of the farce was to see Comecomly sailing across, the very next day, to Astoria in full British uniform, with the Union Jack flying at the masthead.

On board of the *Racoon* was Mr. M'Donald, one of the senior partners of the North-West Company, generally known by the name of Brascroche. He assumed forthwith the direction of affairs at Astoria. Comecomly soon got into his sleeve; and before the former was twenty-four hours in office, the latter had a new chief's suit on.

On the second day after the *Racoon* came to anchor, Captain Black and his officers landed at Astoria, and found they had been baulked in their expectations; the place being already in the possession of the North-West Company by an amicable arrangement. They laughed heartily at their own disappointment, for they had made up their minds that the capture of Astoria would yield them a rich prize; but in place of a golden egg they found only an empty shell. After visiting the place, Captain Black, turning round to one of his officers, said, "The Yankees are always beforehand with us."

On the 12th day of December, the death-warrant of short-lived Astoria was signed. On that day, Captain Black went through the customary ceremony of taking possession, not only of Astoria, but of the whole country. What the vague term of "whole country" in the present case meant, I know not. Does it mean the Columbia? Does it mean all the country lying west of the Rocky Mountains? Or does it merely mean the coast of the Pacific? That part of the ceremony which referred to the "whole country" might have been dispensed with; for the country had already been taken possession of in the name of his Britannic Majesty, and that many years ago, by Drake, by Cooke, by Vancouver, and lastly by Black. The name of Astoria was now changed to that of Fort George; and this done, the *Racoon* prepared to leave the Columbia. Captain Black was a gentleman of courteous and affable manners. He was never once heard to utter an oath or indecorous expression all the time he was in the river; and there was a general and sincere regret felt when he left Fort George.

Having now detailed the principal occurrences at Astoria, we return to take up the subject of Mr. Hunt's voyage. The reader will bear in mind that Mr. Hunt sailed in the *Albatross* in August last, for the Marquesas, where he arrived safe. Nor had he been long there till he met with Commodore Porter, of the United States' frigate *Essex*, from whom he learned that a British frigate called the *Phœbe*, with two sloops of war, the *Cherub* and *Racoon*, were on their way to Columbia. Hearing this, Mr. Hunt tried his uttermost to get some assistance from Captain Porter in order to secure the American property now in jeopardy at Astoria, but to no purpose. The commodore would not budge, having no instructions from his government to that effect; and having besides learned, no doubt, that Mr. Astor refused to join the Boston merchants in their praiseworthy designs. Mr. Hunt, now finding all his efforts at the Marquesas fruitless, sailed for the Sandwich Islands, and landed at Woahoo on the 18th of December. While at that island, he received the disastrous intelligence that a vessel bound for Columbia had been wrecked some time previous, at the island of Tahvorowa. Thinking it possible that it might be a vessel from Astor bound for Astoria, he repaired thither with all possible despatch, and found, to his mortification, that his conjectures were but too true.

The vessel in question proved to be the *Lark*, Captain Northcop, bound for Astoria. The *Lark*, which ought to have sailed in September 1812, did not leave New York till the 6th of March 1813, the very time when she was expected to arrive at the place of her destination. And this unaccountable delay of six months accelerated the downfall of unfortunate Astoria; for had the *Lark* left New York at the usual time, and reached the Columbia, her seasonable arrival would have beyond a doubt changed the face of affairs.

But there was a fatality attending the ships bound for Columbia, and the loss of the *Lark* added another link to the chain of misfortune. This ill-fated vessel upset in a squall, about 250 miles from the Sandwich Islands, and so sudden and unexpected was the violent wind, that not a hatch was shut at the time, so she filled with the second wave and became completely water-logged. The sufferings of the crew were extreme: they remained lashed to the bowsprit for four days and four nights without drink, food, or sleep! the rest of the vessel being completely under water. On the eighth day after the accident, a jury-mast was rigged, and a small scaffolding erected, on which the men could sleep. Still their sufferings from thirst and hunger were intolerable, their only drink a little wine, and a very scanty supply of raw pork their food. On the twelfth day they came in sight of land, and six days after that they abandoned the ship and got to shore. Up to the time of their leaving the ship, six men, a boy, and one of the officers perished, and the rest of the crew were so reduced from various causes, that they were utterly incapable of helping themselves, much less the sinking ship. Soon after the vessel was abandoned, it neared the beach, stranded, and went to pieces. Nor could all the efforts of the captain prevent the savage horde from seizing and destroying everything that came in their way; and not only that, but they effectually prevented him or any of the crew from approaching the wreck, or touching anything the waves threw on shore. Nor did the tumultuous spirit of the rabble subside till they stripped the shipwrecked men of their clothes, as well as the vessel of her cargo; so that the condition of the sufferers was very little improved by their getting to land.

During these proceedings Mr. Ogden, the supercargo, set off for Woahoo, the residence of king Tammeatameah, to claim protection and restitution of the property; but behold! his majesty told him in few words that the wreck belonged to the state. "Who," said Tammeatameah, "brought the ship to shore?" "The waves," replied Mr. Ogden. "Then the waves are mine," rejoined the king. "Had you brought the vessel to land," said his majesty to Mr. Ogden, "the ship and cargo both would have belonged to you, and I should have granted you protection and restitution; but as you abandoned the wreck at sea, and fortune drove it on my territories, the wreck is no longer yours but mine. The clothing you and your people brought to shore, shall be restored; but whatever was in the ship, at the time of her stranding or grounding, belongs to me:" and here the conversation ended.

Such, then, was the fate of the unfortunate *Lark*, and such the statement of her commander to Mr. Hunt on his arrival at the Sandwich Islands; and here again we must leave Mr. Hunt in the happy isles, while we go back to see what is passing in the Columbia interior, and after that we shall return again to the subject of Mr. Hunt's voyage: by so doing, we shall conform better to the natural connection of the different subjects, without perplexing the reader's attention. In the mean time, it may be stated that Messrs. M'Kenzie and John Stuart proceeded to the interior, to see the property delivered over to the North-West Company, agreeably to the late contract. After these gentlemen had settled the business at Spokane, and assembled all the people of the late concern belonging to that district, they came to me at Oakinacken on the 15th of December: here also Mr. Stuart, from the She Whaps, had arrived with the men of that quarter. Finishing, then, the business at Oakinacken, we all prepared to embark, and left that place for Fort George on the 20th of December.

On our way down the Columbia, such was the mildness of the winter that not a speck of ice was to be seen. At the head of the cascades, a place always notorious for its bad population, we encamped, and were disturbed all night by the whooping and yelling of savages, who kept prowling in the woods round us. Notwithstanding the strictest watch, several arrows were shot into our camp, and a man named Plessis was wounded in the ear. We fired several shots into the woods, from a three-pounder, which kept the Indians at a distance. In the morning we passed the cascades peaceably, and arrived safe at Fort George on the 7th of January 1814. The people from the Wallamitte had just reached that place before us.

Below the cascades, there is no impediment whatever to the navigation of the river, by night or by day. The brigade, therefore, went sweeping down the current in the dark. In passing the last of the bad places, however, my boat happening to get broken, we had to put ashore to repair, and, by the time we got under weigh again, the brigade had left us far behind. Next morning at daybreak, I met, opposite to the Wallamitte, two North-West canoes and twenty men, under the direction of Messrs Keith and Alex. Stuart, two partners of the North-West Company, on their way to the interior. We breakfasted together, and I strongly advised them to turn back, since so small a party, and strangers too, could never hope to pass through the hostile tribes in safety. They, however, made light of the matter, giving me to understand that they were North-Westers! so we parted, and they proceeded. While talking on the subject of danger, one of those swelling fellows, such as may be ordinarily seen stuck up in the end of a north-west canoe, with a bonnet of feathers surpassing in size the head of a buffalo bull, turned round to my men and said,—"Do you think we are Americans? we will teach the Indians to respect us." In the darkness of the night, they had not seen our people on their way down. The moment Mr. M'Kenzie reached Fort George, he represented to M'Donald and M'Tavish the folly and danger of the attempt; consequently, a canoe with twelve men, under the direction of Mr. Franchere, was immediately despatched to bring them back; but it was unfortunately too late.

On Messrs. Keith and Stuart's arrival at the portage of the cascades, the Indians collected, as usual, in great numbers; but did not attempt anything till the people had got involved and dispersed in the portage; they then seized the opportunity, and began to help themselves; they drew their bows, brandished their lances, and pounced upon the gun-cases, powder-kegs, and bales of goods, at the place where Mr. Stuart was stationed. He tried to defend his post, but owing to the wet weather his gun missed fire several times, and before any assistance could reach him he had received three arrows, and his gun had just fallen from his hand as a half-breed, named Finlay, came up and shot his assailant dead. By this time the people had concentrated, and the Indians fled to their strongholds behind the rocks and trees. To save the property in this moment of alarm and confusion was impossible; to save themselves, and carry off Mr. Stuart, was the first consideration. They, therefore, made for their canoes with all haste, and embarked. Here it was found that one man was missing, and Mr. Keith, who was still on shore, urged the party strongly to wait a little; but the people in the canoes called on Mr. Keith, in the tone of despair, to jump into the canoe or else they would push off and leave him also; but he, being a resolute man and not easily intimidated, immediately cocked his gun and threatened to shoot the first man that moved. Mr. Stuart, who was faint from loss of blood, seeing Mr. Keith determined, and the men frightened out of their wits, beckoned to Mr. Keith to embark. The moment he jumped into the canoe they pushed off and shot down the current; nor had they proceeded far before they met Mr. Franchere, who had been sent after them. Both canoes then hastening day and night, reached the fort the second day. During this time Mr. Stuart suffered much, and was very low, nor had his wounds been yet examined. The barbs of the arrows were of iron, and one of them had struck on a stone pipe which he carried in his waistcoat pocket, and to that fortunate circumstance he perhaps owed his life: one of these barbs it was found impossible to extract, and he suffered great pain, and was confined to bed for upwards of two months. He then began gradually to recover. On the ninth day the man who had been abandoned in the affray with the Indians reached the fort in a state of nudity, having torn his clothes wandering through the woods, suffering at the same time the miseries of cold and hunger; and thus terminated the first adventure of the North-West on the Columbia.

The object of this expedition was threefold—to forward despatches for the east side of the mountains, to convey supplies of ammunition to the interior, and thence to proceed to the Snake country for Mr. Reed and his party; but the unlucky affair at the cascades knocked the whole on the head, and taught the strutting and plumed bullies of the north that, although they were North-Westers, the lads of the cascades did not respect their feathers.

This disaster set the whole North-West machinery at Fort George in motion. Revenge for the insult, and a heavy retribution on the heads of the whole Cath-le-yach-é-yach nation, was decreed in a full council; and for a whole week nothing was to be heard about the place but the clang of arms and the sound of war. Every man worth naming was armed *cap-à-pie*, and besides the ordinary arms and accoutrements, two big guns, six swivels, cutlasses, hand-grenades, and handcuffs, with ten days' provisions, were embarked; in short, all the weapons and missiles that could be brought into action were collected and put in train for destroying the vile banditti of the cascades, root and branch.

Eighty-five picked men and two Chinook interpreters, under six chosen leaders, were enrolled in the expedition, and the command of it tendered to Mr. M'Kenzie, who, however, very prudently declined the honour, merely observing that as he was on the eve of leaving the country, he did not wish to mix himself up with North-West affairs; but that he would cheerfully go as a volunteer. The command then devolved on Mr. M'Tavish; and on the 20th of January, with buoyant hearts and flags flying, a fleet of ten sail conveyed the invincibles to the field of action, where they all arrived safe on the third day, and cast anchor at Strawberry Island, near the foot of the rapids. On their way up, the name of this formidable armament struck such terror into the marauders along the river, that they fled to the fastnesses and hiding-places of the wilderness; even the two Chinook interpreters could neither sleep nor eat, so grieved were they at the thoughts of the bloody scenes that were soon to follow.

On the next morning after the squadron came to anchor, the Indians were summoned to appear and give an account of their late conduct, and they were desired, if they wished mercy to be extended towards them, to deliver up at once all the property plundered from the expedition of Messrs. Keith and Stuart. The Cath-le-yach-é-yach chiefs, not the least intimidated by the hostile array before them, sent back this answer, "The whites have killed two of our people, let them deliver up the murderers to us, and we will deliver to them all the property in our possession." After returning this answer, the Indians sent off all their wives and children into the thick woods; then arming themselves, they took their stand behind the trees and rocks. M'Tavish then sent the interpreters to invite them to a parley, and to smoke the pipe of peace. The Indians returned for answer, that "When the whites had paid according to Indian law for the two men they had killed, they would smoke the pipe of peace, but not till then. Their wives and children were safe, and as for themselves they were prepared for the worst." And this was all the progress that was made during the first day.

The next day the interpreters were sent to sound them again. Towards noon a few stragglers and slaves approached the camp and delivered up a small parcel of cloth and cotton, torn up into pieces, and scarcely worth picking up, with this message from the chiefs:—"We have sent you some of the property; deliver us up the murderers, and we will send you the rest." Some were for hanging the Indians up at once; others for detaining them: at last, however, it was resolved to let them go, and they departed. In the evening two of the principal Indians surrendered themselves to M'Tavish, bringing also a small parcel of odds-and-ends, little better than the last. Being interrogated on the subject of the stolen property, they denied being present at the time, and had cunning enough to make their innocence appear, and also to convince M'Tavish that they were using their utmost influence to bring the Indians to terms, and deliver up the property. A council was then held to decide on the fate of the prisoners. Some were, as in the former case, for hanging them up without judge or jury; some for taking them down to Fort George in irons. The council was divided, and at last it was resolved to treat the prisoners liberally and let them go; and, to the disgrace of the expedition, they were set at liberty—nor did they ever return again; and thus ended the negotiations of the second day.

The third day the interpreters were at work again; but in place of making any favourable impression on the Indians, they were told that if they returned again without delivering up the murderers, they would be fired upon. During this day, the Indians came once or twice out to the verge of the woods. Some were for firing the big guns where they were seen thickest; others, more ardent, but less calculating, were for storming their haunts, and bringing the matter to a speedy issue. Every movement of the whites was seen by the Indians, but not a movement of the Indians could be discerned by the whites; and the day passed away without any result. Next morning it was discovered that some of the Indians lurking about had entered the camp and carried off two guns, a kettle, and one of the men's bonnets, and the Indians were seen occasionally flying from place to place, and now and then whooping and yelling, as if some plan of attack were in contemplation. This was a new symptom, and convinced the whites that they were getting more bold and daring in proportion as their opponents were passive and undecided. These circumstances made the whites reflect on their own situation. The savages, sheltered behind the trees and rocks, might cut them all off without being seen; besides, it was intimated by the interpreters that the Indians might all this time be increasing their numbers by foreign auxiliaries; and whether true or false, the suggestion had its effect in determining the whites that they stood upon dangerous ground, and that the sooner they left it the better. They therefore, without recovering the property, firing a gun, or securing a single prisoner, sounded the retreat, and returned home on the ninth day—making the matter ten times worse than it was before. This warlike expedition was turned into ridicule by the Cath-le-yach-é-yachs, and had a very bad effect on the Indians generally; but the best of it was, on their way back, some turned off towards the Wallamitte to hide their disgrace, others remained for some days at the Cowlitz, and M'Tavish himself reached Fort George in the night; and so ended this inglorious expedition, which promised so much and did so little.

Here it may be observed that the nature of the ground along the cascades, on both sides of the river, is such as to afford no position secure from attack or surprise; and it showed a manifest want of judgment, not only in a military commander, but in an Indian trader, to expose his people in such a dangerous situation, where the Indians might have waylaid and cut them off to a man, and that without quitting their fastnesses; whereas the whole difficulty might have been easily obviated—for a very simple stratagem on the part of the whites might have quietly secured, as hostages, three or four of the principal men, and that would have soon settled effectually the whole affair, without noise or any such warlike demonstration.

# CHAPTER XVII.

Party to the Wallamitte—Hunt's voyage concluded—The brig *Pedlar* —M'Dougall suspected—His character vindicated—Mr. Hunt's remarks on the late concern—His liberality—His farewell address to the clerks—Final departure from Columbia—The party for Canada—Efforts and disappointments—Snake expedition—The melancholy story of Pierre Dorion's wife—Massacre of the Snake party—Remarks—A winter in the Blue Mountains—List of casualties—Astor's hopes disappointed—Comment on the late concern.

After the late expedition to the cascades, in which our people had mixed themselves up with the North-West Company, and of course came in for a share of the general odium, they retired to pass the remainder of the winter in the Wallamitte—a place notorious for gormandizing; and here we shall leave them to enjoy, in peace and quietness, the fruits of the chace, while we turn again to take up and finish the wanderings of Mr. Hunt, who, it will be remembered, was left at the Sandwich Islands in quest of a vessel.

After Mr. Hunt had learned the fate of the unfortunate *Lark*, as already related, he had but one course left, namely, to purchase a ship and return to Columbia with all possible despatch. On meeting with Captain Northcop, he bargained for and purchased a snug little brig for ten thousand five hundred and fifty dollars, called the *Pedlar*, from Boston, and giving the command of her to the captain of the *Lark*, they embarked, bade a farewell to the Sandwich Islands on the 22nd of January, and sailed direct for the Columbia River, where they arrived, after a rather tedious voyage, on the 28th of February.

When Mr. Hunt arrived, he expressed himself dissatisfied with some points of the negotiation that had taken place; but chiefly with that part of it which related to the sale of the furs. But it was now too late: the whole business was irrevocably settled. To repine or find fault was therefore useless; and, under all circumstances, Mr. M'Dougall had perhaps made the best bargain he could. Nor was it likely that two men placed in different positions, such as Mr. Hunt at the Sandwich Islands and M'Dougall at Columbia, could view the same object in the same light. The circumstance, however, of M'Dougall having joined the North-West Company, and having already become a partner in that concern, threw suspicion on his conduct, and this perhaps, weighed more heavily on Mr. Hunt's mind than anything else; and certainly, to say the least of it, M'Dougall's conduct, in this particular, was indiscreet, and might in some degree justify imputation—at least, his enemies made a handle of it; yet there is not the least proof that he had betrayed his trust. M'Dougall always bore the character of integrity; he was a man of principle, faithful to his word, and punctual to his engagements; but at times he was overbearing, peevish, haughty, and obstinate; and this unfortunate temper had well nigh proved fatal to the undertaking in the commencement of his career at Astoria. With these slight exceptions, however, M'Dougall's conduct was fair and unimpeachable. He was not a man of fortune; he had already sacrificed four years of his time on the Columbia; and, besides, it was not M'Dougall that proffered his services, nor was he more than half inclined to accede to the offers made to him—this we know; but it was the North-Westers themselves who wished to secure him, being aware that he was a man of ambition, and fond of enterprize. His experience also gave him a strong ascendant. M'Dougall had been with the nabobs of the North-West before, and did not leave them without tasting of the bitter cup of disappointment; he could, therefore, have had no predilection in their favour. Add to this, that previous to any arrangement with the North-West Company, he had finally closed Mr. Astor's affairs, and delivered up all the papers and documents of that concern into the hands of Mr. M'Kenzie. This delivery was confirmed by Mr. Hunt.

On the 27th of March, as soon as the people from all quarters were assembled together, and the papers and drafts belonging to Mr. Astor delivered over to Mr. M'Kenzie, Mr. Hunt called all the clerks before him, and, entering into a full detail of the unfortunate circumstances which brought about the failure of the enterprize, he expressed his deep and sincere regret that so much talent and zeal had been employed to no purpose, and thrown to the winds; that we had been the pioneers of a more successful and fortunate rival; that the North-Westers would now reap the fruits of our industry; and the only consolation left us was that every man had done his duty, and to circumstances over which we had no control might chiefly be attributed the failure of our undertaking. He then went on:—

"My friends, I am now about to leave you, and it may be that we part to meet no more. I am exceedingly sorry that it is not in my power to reward you according to your zeal and merit. There are two of you, however, to whom I am in honour bound to make some acknowledgment before leaving this place; they having come here not for salary, but for promotion. As a small testimony of my regard, I have placed at their disposal five hundred dollars each, and wish it were even more for their sakes. I am to leave this place by sea, and those of you who prefer that course may embark with me; while for those who feel disposed to remain in the country, I have made such arrangements with the North-West gentlemen as may turn to their advantage. For those that will accompany me I shall do my utmost to provide; the same I 'll do for those that remain, or go home by land, if in my power." These words were not the hollow efforts of cunning or deceit; they were the genuine expressions of the heart. For Mr. Hunt was a conscientious and upright man—a friend to all, and beloved as well as respected by all. I found five hundred dollars placed to my account, and Mr. Seaton the same; we being the pair alluded to by Mr. Hunt.

On the 3rd of April Mr. Hunt, accompanied by Mr. Halsey, Mr. Seaton, Mr. Clapp, and Mr. Farnham, embarked on board the *Pedlar* at three o'clock in the afternoon, and took their final departure from Fort George. Mr. M'Lennan, Ross Cox, and myself, entered the North-West service; and I proceeded to resume my former charge at Oakinacken.

On the 4th of April the North-West brigade left Fort George for the interior, and along with it Messrs. M'Kenzie, Stuart, and Clarke, with all those of the late concern intending to leave the country, set out on their journey across land for Montreal, Mr. Franchere among the number. It will be recollected that he had entered the North-West service; but by mutual consent he became free, and preferred accompanying the party for Canada. We shall now leave the Montreal party on their journey, and turn to another subject.

It will be remembered, that one of the objects of the unfortunate expedition of Messrs. Keith and Stuart was to proceed to the Snake country in search of Mr. Reed and his party, who were sent thither last summer; but that expedition having failed, it was now proposed that Mr. Keith with a small party should undertake the business, and proceed to Spokane Fort. From the mouth of the Umatallow, Mr. Keith was to have taken his departure, and a guide was there engaged for the purpose; but when everything was arranged, and the party ready to start, the guide expressed a wish to continue with the brigade as far as the Walla Walla, and from thence set out for the Snake country. Mr. Keith and his party accordingly reimbarked, and we reached the Walla Walla early the next day; here, again, we were on the eve of starting, when a few Indians arrived, and with them the wife of Pierre Dorion the interpreter. The timely arrival of this poor unfortunate woman put an end to the Snake expedition; and we shall relate her melancholy story in her own words:—

"About the middle of August we reached the Great Snake River, and soon afterwards, following up a branch to the right hand, where there were plenty of beaver, we encamped; and there Mr. Reed built a house to winter in. After the house was built, the people spent their time in trapping beaver. About the latter end of September, Hoback, Robinson, and Rezner came to us; but they were very poor, the Indians having robbed them of everything they had about fifteen days before. Mr. Reed gave them some clothing and traps, and they went to hunt with my husband. Landrie got a fall from his horse, lingered a while, and died of it. Delaunay was killed, when trapping: my husband told me that he saw his scalp with the Indians, and knew it from the colour of the hair. The Indians about the place were very friendly to us; but when strange tribes visited us, they were troublesome, and always asked Mr. Reed for guns and ammunition: on one occasion, they drove an arrow into one of our horses, and took a capot from La Chapelle. Mr. Reed not liking the place where we first built, we left it, and built farther up the river, on the other side. After the second house was built, the people went to trap as usual, sometimes coming home every night, sometimes sleeping out for several nights together at a time. Mr. Reed and one man generally stayed at the house.

"Late one evening, about the 10th of January, a friendly Indian came running to our house, in a great fright, and told Mr. Reed that a band of the bad Snakes, called the Dog-rib tribe, had burnt the first house that we had built, and that they were coming on whooping and singing the war-song. After communicating this intelligence, the Indian went off immediately, and I took up my two children, got upon a horse, and set off to where my husband was trapping; but the night was dark, the road bad, and I lost my way. The next day being cold and stormy, I did not stir. On the second day, however, I set out again; but seeing a large smoke in the direction I had to go, and thinking it might proceed from Indians, I got into the bushes again and hid myself. On the third day, late in the evening, I got in sight of the hut, where my husband and the other men were hunting; but just as I was approaching the place, I observed a man coming from the opposite side, and staggering as if unwell: I stopped where I was till he came to me. Le Clerc, wounded and faint from loss of blood, was the man. He told me that La Chapelle, Rezner, and my husband had been robbed and murdered that morning. I did not go into the hut; but putting Le Clerc and one of my children on the horse I had with me, I turned round immediately, took to the woods, and I retraced my steps back again to Mr. Reed's: Le Clerc, however, could not bear the jolting of the horse, and he fell once or twice, so that we had to remain for nearly a day in one place; but in the night he died, and I covered him over with brushwood and snow, put my children on the horse, I myself walking and leading the animal by the halter. The second day I got back again to the house. But sad was the sight! Mr. Reed and the men were all murdered, scalped, and cut to pieces. Desolation and horror stared me in the face. I turned from the shocking sight in agony and despair; took to the woods with my children and horse, and passed the cold and lonely night without food or fire. I was now at a loss what to do: the snow was deep, the weather cold, and we had nothing to eat. To undertake a long journey under such circumstances was inevitable death. Had I been alone I would have run all risks and proceeded; but the thought of my children perishing with hunger distracted me. At this moment a sad alternative crossed my mind: should I venture to the house among the dead to seek food for the living? I knew there was a good stock of fish there; but it might have been destroyed or carried off by the murderers; and besides, they might be still lurking about and see me: yet I thought of my children. Next morning, after a sleepless night, I wrapped my children in my robe, tied my horse in a thicket, and then went to a rising ground, that overlooked the house, to see if I could observe anything stirring about the place. I saw nothing; and, hard as the task was, I resolved to venture after dark: so I returned back to my children, and found them nearly frozen, and I was afraid to make a fire in the day time lest the smoke might be seen; yet I had no other alternative, I must make a fire, or let my children perish. I made a fire and warmed them. I then rolled them up again in the robe, extinguished the fire, and set off after dark to the house: went into the store and ransacked every hole and corner, and at last found plenty of fish scattered about. I gathered, hid, and slung upon my back as much as I could carry, and returned again before dawn of day to my children. They were nearly frozen, and weak with hunger. I made a fire and warmed them, and then we shared the first food we had tasted for the last three days. Next night I went back again, and carried off another load; but when these efforts were over, I sank under the sense of my afflictions, and was for three days unable to move, and without hope. On recovering a little, however, I packed all up, loaded my horse, and putting my children on the top of the load, set out again on foot, leading the horse by the halter as before. In this sad and hopeless condition I travelled through deep snow among the woods, rocks, and rugged paths for nine days, till I and the horse could travel no more. Here I selected a lonely spot at the foot of a rocky precipice in the Blue Mountains, intending there to pass the remainder of the winter. I killed my horse, and hung up the flesh on a tree for my winter food. I built a small hut with pine branches, long grass, and moss, and packed it all round with snow to keep us warm, and this was a difficult task, for I had no axe, but only a knife to cut wood. In this solitary dwelling, I passed fifty-three lonely days! I then left my hut and set out with my children to cross the mountains; but I became snow blind the second day, and had to remain for three days without advancing a step; and this was unfortunate, as our provisions were almost exhausted. Having recovered my sight a little, I set out again, and got clear off the mountains, and down to the plains on the fifteenth day after leaving my winter encampments; but for six days we had scarcely anything to eat, and for the last two days not a mouthful. Soon after we had reached the plains I perceived a smoke at a distance; but being unable to carry my children farther, I wrapped them up in my robe, left them concealed, and set out alone in hopes of reaching the Indian camp, where I had seen the smoke; but I was so weak that I could hardly crawl, and had to sleep on the way. Next day, at noon, I got to the camp. It proved to belong to the Walla Wallas, and I was kindly treated by them. Immediately on my arrival the Indians set off in search of my children, and brought them to the camp the same night. Here we staid for two days, and then moved on to the river, expecting to hear something of the white people on their way either up or down."

This ended the woman's story of hardships and woe. That it was the Snakes who killed the party there is not the least doubt. The Dog-ribbed tribe have always passed for bad Indians; and besides, in the dead of winter, neither the Blackfeet on the east, nor the Nez Percés on the north, can wage war with the Snakes at that season of the year.

In recapitulating the number of casualties or disasters which befell the Pacific Fur Company during its short existence, we cannot help lamenting so great a sacrifice of human life in so limited a period. The tragical list stands thus:—

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|---|---|
| Lost on the bar | 8 |
| Land expedition | 5 |
| *Tonquin* | 27 |
| *Astoria* | 3 |
| *Lark* | 8 |
| Snake country | 9 |
| Final departure | 1 |
| Total | 61 |

Well might we, with Virgil, say, "Who can relate such woes without a tear!"

We have now brought together, and within a small compass, the accounts of all the different and widely extended branches of the concern. That concern which proposed to extend its grasping influence from ocean to ocean, and which, to use the projector's own words, "was to have annihilated the South Company; rivalled the North-West Company; extinguished the Hudson's Bay Company; driven the Russians into the Frozen Ocean; and with the resources of China to have enriched America." But how vain are the designs of man! That undertaking which but yesterday promised such mighty things, is to-day no more.

Various in those days were the opinions entertained as to the merits of the undertaking in a speculative light; but few there were who saw clearly through the mist inseparable from a novel and remote design. The means were ample, the field unbounded, and the River Columbia was the contemplated centre of a trade conducted by talent, and in the hands of a nation which, in the natural course of events, must soon encircle the remotest parts of the earth, and draw within its sphere of action the fairest portion of the fur trade.

It is therefore not surprising that the jealousy of the Canada traders should have eagerly seized on the first opportunity to check the encroachments, or extinguish the rising fame of this infant but gigantic rival. The course of events was favourable to their ambition, and the end justified the means conducive to their future aggrandizement.

The multifarious avocations of Mr. Astor must inevitably have prevented his bestowing the requisite degree of attention on each particular subject which came under his consideration. Hence, matters within his immediate reach, or which appealed to his own experience, engrossed his special care as objects of primary importance; while, on the other hand, those referring to a distance, or which he had not habitually at heart, were neglected by him as comparatively trivial.

During the slow progress of a distant and struggling establishment, exposed to the cruelty and rapacity of savages, or the perils of uncertain navigation, it may be naturally expected that the owner should lean to such other parts of the undertaking as may hold out a fair promise of recompensing for the hazard of the adventure. Hence it was that his ships were the chief objects of his solicitude; that the captains retained his special trust; that the settlement was ill supplied; and hence the ungenerous dispensation of his confidence among its venturesome though too credulous leaders.

Had he, however, acquired such insight into the practice of the Indian as he so eminently attained in all other branches of trade; had his mind been as liberal as it was acute, or as ready to reward merit as to find fault; or were he as conversant with human nature as he was expert in a bargain; and had he also begun his undertaking not at the commencement of a war, but at its close, then competency and ease might have been the lot of his servants, instead of misery and want — success might have crowned his ambition, glory finished his career, and the name of Astor might have been handed down with admiration, as having borne away the palm of enterprize.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Origin of the Oakinackens—Religion—Good Spirit—Evil Spirit—Ideas of a future state—Ceremonies—End of this world—Extent of country—Names and number of tribes—Warriors—Population—Royal family—The great chief, or Red Fox—Wild hemp—Long journeys—Barter—Emblem of royalty—Government—Indian ideas—Council of chiefs—Manners—Employments—Plurality of wives—Brawls—Dress and clothing—Stratagems—A savage in wolf's clothing—Painted faces and sleek hair.

After closing the drama of the Pacific Fur Company we shall now raise the curtain a little, and take a cursory peep at the Indians of the interior; but more particularly of the Oakinackens.

The origin of savage nations is mixed up with so much fable that it is scarcely possible, through the mist of tradition, to trace their descent clearly to any source: nor can this surprise us when we consider how unsatisfactory the most learned inquiries often prove, with respect to the origin of many civilized nations. Indeed, all that can be aimed at is to state distinctly and fairly the opinions handed down from one generation to another, and currently believed by the people themselves.

The origin of the Oakinackens is thus related:—Long ago, when the sun was young, to use their own expression, and not bigger than a star, there was an island far off in the middle of the ocean, called Samah-tuma-whoolah, or White Man's Island. The island was full of inhabitants of gigantic stature, and very white, and it was governed by a tall white woman, called Scomalt. The good woman Scomalt, possessing the attributes of a deity, could create whatever she pleased. The white people on this island quarrelled among themselves, and many were killed in the affray, which conduct so enraged Scomalt that she drove all the wicked to one end of the island, then broke off the part on which they stood, and pushed it adrift to the mercy of the winds and waves. There they floated about for a length of time, not knowing whither they went. They were tossed about on the face of the deep till all died but one man and woman, and this couple finding the island beginning to sink with them made a canoe, and paddling for many days and nights, going in a westerly direction, they came to a group of islands, and kept steering through them till they made the main land—the land which they now inhabit—but they say that it has grown much larger since that time. This couple, when first expelled from the island of their forefathers, were very white, like the other inhabitants of the island; but they suffered so much while floating on the ocean that they became dark and dingy from the exposure, and their skins have retained that colour ever since. From this man and woman all the Indians of the continent have their origin; and as a punishment for their original wickedness, they were condemned by the great Scomalt to poverty, degradation, and nakedness, and to be called Skyloo, or Indians.

The religion of the Oakinackens, like that of all Indian tribes, is difficult to understand, and still more difficult to explain. They, however, believe in a good and an evil spirit, who preside over the destinies of man, and that all good actions will be rewarded, and all evil deeds punished in a future state. The good spirit, or master of life, they call Elemehum-kill-an-waist, or Sky-appe; and the bad spirit, Kisht-samah, or Chacha; both are invincible, and keep constantly moving to and fro through the air, so that nothing can be done unknown to them. They believe that all good Indians after death go to the Elemehum-kill-an-waist, and that the wicked who kill and steal, go to the Kisht-samah. On all solemn occasions they offer up a short prayer to the good spirit for his assistance and help. They have no places of worship, public or private. The god whom they adore is invincible. In all their religious ceremonies the great pipe of peace is smoked as a peace-offering to the Elemehum-kill-an-waist, and also on all occasions of peace or war, or other matters of state; and this is done by holding the pipe (when filled and lighted) first to the east, or rising sun, and drawing three whiffs; then to the west or setting sun; next to the heavens above; and, lastly, to the earth beneath—in each case taking care to draw three whiffs. This religious part of the ceremony is gone through only by the chief when the first pipe is filled, before entering upon business. Then the chief hands the pipe to his next neighbour, who smokes without any ceremony, and he to the next, and so on. At the conclusion of the business there is no ceremony observed.

They believe that this world will have an end, as it had a beginning; and their reason is this, that the rivers and lakes must eventually undermine the earth, and set the land afloat again, like the island of their forefathers, and then all must perish. Frequently they have asked us when it would take place—the its-owl-eigh, or end of the world.

The Oakinackens inhabit a very large tract of country, the boundary of which may be said to commence at the Priest's Rapids on the south; from thence, embracing a space of upwards of one hundred miles in breadth, it runs almost due north until it reaches the She Whaps, making a distance of more than five hundred miles in length; within this line the nation branches out into twelve tribes, under different names. These form, as it were, so many states belonging to the same union, and are governed by petty chiefs, who are, in a manner, independent; nevertheless, all are ready to unite against a common enemy. These tribes, beginning at the southern boundary and taking each according to its locality, may be classed as follows:—Ska-moy-num-achs, Kewaught-chen-unaughs, Piss-cows, Income-can-étook, Tsill-ane, Inti-étook, Battle-le-mule-emauch, or Meat-who, In-spellum, Sin-poh-ell-ech-ach, Sin-who-yelp-pe-took, Sa-milk-a-nuigh, and Oakinacken, which is nearly in the centre. All these tribes, of the great Oakinacken nation, speak the same language; but often differ a good deal from one another as to accent. The whole nation, or twelve tribes taken together, could never muster above six hundred warriors. The number of souls I was never able to ascertain correctly; but, considering the extent of country they possess, they are far from being numerous. I should say there are not more than fifteen persons to every square mile. The Oakinackens are not a warlike people; fishing and hunting, and not war, are their usual occupations.

The principal family of the Oakinacken nation bears the title or name of Conconulps, being the name of the place where the members of it generally reside, which is situate about nine miles up the beautiful stream of the same name. The head, or principal chief of this family, died last year, leaving the inheritance or chieftainship to Quills-chin-eigh-an, his eldest son, about twenty-five years of age. The old man himself was called Who-why-laugh, or Red Fox.

The old chief was a venerable and worthy savage: his influence was great over a wide circle, not only at home, but abroad among the neighbouring tribes. The Red Fox had been many times with his young men at the Great Salt Lake, as they call it, meaning the Pacific, the direct road to which, across the mountains, is almost due west to where they fall on the sea-coast, in about the 49th degree of north latitude. They take generally fifteen days to make the journey, sometimes more, sometimes less, according to circumstances. Traffic is their object: they carry along with them the wild hemp of the interior, prepared and neatly put up into small parcels, which they give in exchange for the higua and trinkets. The hemp is used for making fishing-nets, and is always in great demand on the coast. The higua, which has already been noticed, is the most valuable commodity among the Indians to be found west of the Rocky Mountains, being the circulating medium throughout the country.

The royal insignia of an Indian king or chief is simple, and is always known in the camp. The Oakinacken emblem is a white wolf-skin, fantastically painted with rude figures of different colours—the head and tail decorated with the higua, bears' claws, and the teeth of different animals—suspended from a pole, in a conspicuous place near the chief's lodge.

On our first arrival among this people, the wolf-skin was always to be seen waving conspicuously from the pole; but as they began to associate and got accustomed to us, they became less particular in exhibiting the ensigns of royalty. But although they occasionally threw off the savage ferocity and wild aspect peculiar to savages in general, yet they could not be brought, even after years of friendly intercourse, to change their habits of life. The morose, sullen, and unsociable disposition still remained the same; whereas, on the contrary, the white man almost immediately falls into the customs and ways of the savages. An Indian accustomed to squat on the ground, and double himself up in the lodge, is long, long indeed before he can reconcile himself to sit in a chair; but the white man is at once at home in the Indian lodge, and becomes as easy and contented sitting, squatting, or lying amongst dirt and filth, dogs and fleas, as if in his arm-chair at home—showing how much more easy and natural it is for civilized men to degenerate, than for the savage to elevate himself to the habits of civilized men; but here I should observe, that the Oakinackens are by no means ferocious or cruel, either in looks, habits, or dispositions; but are, on the contrary, rather an easy, mild, and agreeable people.

The government, or ruling power among the Oakinackens, is simple yet effective, and is little more than an ideal system of control. The chieftainship descends from father to son: it is, however, merely a nominal superiority in most cases. Their general maxim is, that Indians were born to be free, and that no man has a natural right to the obedience of another, except he be rich in horses and has many wives; yet it is wonderful how well the government works for the general good, and without any coercive power to back the will of the chief, he is seldom disobeyed: the people submit without a murmur. On all state occasions, of peace or war, the chief has the assistance of a council; that is, he calls all the great men together, they form a ring, sometimes in the chief's lodge, sometimes in the open air. No one is admitted into the council, except he can show some marks or trophy of war, or has performed some praiseworthy deed, according to their ideas, or else he must be rich in horses or have many wives; or, lastly, he may be called by the chief, and that entitles him to a seat without any other qualification. The council being seated, and the ceremonial pipe smoked, the chief, in his usual sitting posture, holds down his head, as if looking to the ground, then opens the business of the meeting by a speech, closing every sentence with great emphasis, the other councillors vociferating approbation. As soon as the chief is done speechifying, others harangue also; but only one at a time. The decision of the council is sure to be zealously carried into effect; but, in all ordinary matters, the chief is not more conspicuous than any other individual, and he seldom interferes in family affairs, or the ordinary routine of daily occurrences: and this, I think, adds greatly to the dignity of his character.

Each nation or principal tribe has generally two chiefs; one for the village, and another called the war-chief. The former is the head of the tribe; and, as already observed, holds his office by lineal descent: the latter is elective, and chosen by the voice or whim of the majority of the people. Every morning at the dawn of day, the head chief rides or walks round the camp or village, and harangues as he goes: the business of the day is then and there settled; but he never interferes with the affairs of families or individuals. All the movements of the camp, as a whole, as well as hunting and other matters of consequence, are settled by the chief's authority alone; and all weightier matters, of peace or war, are settled by the chief and council.

The manners of the Oakinackens are agreeable, easy, and unassuming, and their dispositions mild. They are at times subject to gusts of passion, but it soon blows over; and, on the whole, they are a steady, sincere, shrewd, and brave people. They are generally of the middle size, light, and well made, and better featured and handsomer in their persons, though darker, than the Chinooks or other Indians along the sea-coast. The circumstances of climate will perhaps account for this difference of complexion. Their hair is generally jet black, long, and rather coarse; they have dark black eyes, with teeth white as ivory, well set and regular.

The women wear their hair neatly clubbed on each side of the head behind the ears, and ornamented with double rows of the snowy higua, which are, among the Oakinackens, called Shet-la-cane; but they keep it shed or divided in front. The men's hair is queued or rolled up into a knot behind the head, and ornamented like that of the women; but in front it falls or hangs down loosely before the face, covering the forehead and the eyes, which causes them every now and then to shake the head, or use the hands to uncover their eyes. The young persons of both sexes always paint their faces with red and black bars, extremely well designed.

The men live an active life; between hunting, fishing, war, and making canoes and domestic implements, they are always employed and industrious. Nor are the women less busy—curing fish, drying meat, dressing leather, collecting roots and fire-wood; with their domestic and family affairs, their whole time is occupied; and, indeed, they may be said to serve in the double capacity of wife and slave. They have in general an engaging sweetness, are good housewives, modest in their demeanour, affectionate and chaste, and strongly attached to their husbands and children. Each family is ruled by the joint will or authority of the husband and wife, but more particularly by the latter. At their meals, they generally eat separately and in succession—man, woman, and child.

The greatest source of evil existing among this otherwise happy people is polygamy. All the chiefs and other great men have invariably a plurality of wives: for he that has not one is neither chief nor great man, according to their ideas of greatness, and is looked upon with contempt. Many have two, three, four, or five, according to their means and influence; but those wives do not at all times remain together,—indeed, that would be utterly impossible,—but at different camps where their relations are; so that the husband goes from camp to camp occasionally to visit them, keeping seldom more than one or two at a time with himself. The greatest favourite is of course his constant companion. Indeed, brawls and squabbles constantly ensue when several wives meet; and what is still more revolting, the husband of the eldest daughter of the family is entitled by their laws to take to wife all her sisters as they grow up, if able to maintain them.

The dress or costume is nearly the same for men and women. It is simple, neat, and convenient, and serves unchanged for both winter and summer, hot and cold, wet and dry, day and night. That of the young females consists of a robe or garment of deer-skin, down to their ankles, well dressed, and soft as chamois, with long, wide sleeves, fringed and ornamented with beads, and the more valuable higuas with a belt around the waist, adorned with the teeth of animals, beads, and trinkets, and is far from being unbecoming. Leggings, or Indian stockings, trimmed with all the showy ornaments of Indian fancy; shoes, and a loose robe of deer-skin, thrown carelessly round the body, constitute the whole of their dress at all seasons of the year. While new, white, and clean, it has a pleasing appearance; nor does clothing of our manufacture ever become an Indian woman so well as her own native dress; but as they have no change of clothing, nor any bedclothes excepting an additional skin thrown over them, their garments soon become shabby and unsightly. A new garment once put on remains until it is either worn to rags, or rotten with grease and filth on their backs. Those, however, worn by young people of a certain age, both male and female, are frequently bestowed on their elders when half worn, and replaced by another new suit; so that the younger folks of good circumstances are always well dressed and clean.

The men's garments seldom descend below the knee; and in lieu of being ornamented like those of the women, with gaudy trinkets, they are wrought and garnished in a very fanciful manner with porcupine-quills. During winter the men wear long detached sleeves or mittens up to their shoulders, made of the wolf or fox skins, which are united or fastened together by a string across the shoulders. While on their hunting excursions, they also wear caps made of the skins of the wolf or bear, with the ears erect; their heads being thus metamorphosed into wolves' or bears' heads, they are enabled to approach the game with greater facility. But it is not the head alone that is masked or disguised: I have seen a fellow get into a deer-skin, stripped for the purpose, with the skin of the head and horns complete, walk off on all fours, and get actually among a herd of deer without their taking notice of the deception. But the wolf is the animal they seem to imitate the best. An Indian concealed in a wolf's hide, pulls the skin of the wolf's head, with the face, eyes, and nose entire, over his own head, the ears erect, and tail in its proper place, will walk, run, and frisk about on his hands and feet, so that he can scarcely be distinguished from the real animal itself. There is no bird nor beast of which they cannot imitate the voice so as to decoy it within their reach. Hunting is a favourite exercise with all Indians; and the Oakinackens are very fond of displaying their dexterity in riding, and decoying the animals of the chase. All classes of them paint the face, particularly the young. Painting, and dressing, and decking the hair, is their chief glory; but they are nowise particular about other parts of their persons.

# CHAPTER XIX.

**Marriage contracts—National custom—Exchange of presents—Nocturnal visits—The object—Purchasing the bride—Customs on the occasion—Feuds and quarrels—Tla-quill-augh, or Indian doctor—His office—Precarious life—Mode of paying him—Manner of treating the sick—Customs and ceremonies on the occasion—Hard duty—Superstitions—Knowledge of roots and herbs—Curing wounds—Diseases, or general complaints—Gambling—Tsill-all-a-come, or the national game—Manner of playing it—Bets—Gambling propensities—Hot baths—Manner of using them—On what occasions—Indian qualifications—Gymnastic exercise—Comparison—General remarks.**

We now come to the mode of courtship and the rites of marriage observed among these people. The law of the land, or rather the established custom of the country is, that parents betroth or promise their children in marriage while they are still very young; and these contracts are in most cases held valid when the minors come of age.

When a marriage alliance is thus entered into between parties on behalf of their infant children, reciprocal presents exchanged immediately between them serve as a seal to the marriage contract. These presents are occasionally repeated afterwards; but not by both parties, as in the first instance. The friends of the young woman cease to give, but are always ready to receive what the friends of the young man may from time to time choose to bestow, until the parties come of age. What these presents consist of is immaterial, and depends on the means of the parties. Sometimes horses, or a horse, or a dressed skin, or a few trinkets of but little value; but as soon as the young man attains the age of fourteen or fifteen years, and the young woman that of eleven or twelve, he then goes and pays his addresses to her in person; which is done in this way:—After the people are all in bed, the young man goes to the lodge or wigwam of his intended bride, enters it in the dark, makes a small fire, and sits by it till he is observed by some of the inmates. The whisper then goes round. If he be welcome, the girl's mother gets up, and without speaking to the young man herself, she awakens her daughter, who sits up with him by the fire; but the matron immediately retires to rest, leaving the young couple by themselves. During the *tête-à-tête*, no person in the lodge ever interrupts them. The interview is not long: the young man then departs, and the girl retires to rest again. These visits are repeated some three or four times, or more; and if the suitor be welcomed on every occasion, all goes on well. He then goes in the day-time, pretty sure of success, to his intended father-in-law, accompanied by some near relative, and bringing with him the purchase-money; that is, horses, robes, skins, and trinkets, more or less, according to the rank of the parties. On arrival they sit down opposite to the door of the lodge. If invited in, all is well; then the pipe of peace is smoked; one side of the lodge is put in order; a new mat is spread out, and the young man seated thereon. The young woman is then brought by her father and mother, each taking her by an arm, and placed near her intended husband. They are thenceforth considered lawfully married. This done, the pipe of peace is again produced; and during the ceremony of smoking, the father-in-law and young man's relative expatiate on the worth of their respective families; after which the parties regale, the bridegroom's companion returns home, and the whole business is ended.

Now in all cases of first marriage the wife must be purchased by her husband; for there is no greater disgrace to a family than for a parent to give his daughter away in marriage for nothing, as they call it. In this, as in many other instances, the custom here is exactly the reverse of that which prevails in civilized life; for in place of giving a portion with the daughter, the parents require a portion for her; and the nobler the family the greater must be the donation, for the quality of the bride is on all occasions measured by the price paid for her by the husband. I have seen, however, the property tendered more than once refused; nor is it uncommon to increase the offer once or twice till it is accepted. We have now shown the fair and natural side of the question, and shall next turn to take a view of the reverse side.

It sometimes happens that the plighted virgin rejects the parents' choice. The parents themselves also change their sentiments in this case; and the young woman marries, not the person she was betrothed to, but another. This never fails to produce feuds and quarrels between the families concerned; the tide of animosity runs high—so high, sometimes, that the tribe splits into two portions, which separate from each other, perhaps permanently.

We need not touch on second or subsequent marriages; they are made and unmade according to circumstances, whim, or fancy, without being subject to any other law than the will of the parties themselves.

We now come to a rather mysterious part of our subject, which I could never rightly understand, and therefore do not expect to guide the reader satisfactorily through this labyrinth of superstition and jugglery. It refers to a class of functionaries called medicine-men, or priests, or perhaps, what would be nearer the true meaning, conjurors; for I know not exactly which of these terms would be the most applicable to them, as the class of men to which we allude act occasionally in all these capacities. They are called Tla-quill-aughs, which signifies, in their language, men of supernatural gifts, who pretend to know all things, and can kill and cure by magic whom they please. Among the whites they go by the name of doctors or jugglers.

There are no acquirements, so far as I know, deemed essential to qualify a person for the office of a tla-quill-augh. In all Indian tribes there are three or four characters of this description. The tla-quill-aughs are men generally past the meridian of life; in their habits grave and sedate, with a certain shyness and cunning about them. Like most Indians, they possess a good knowledge of herbs and roots, and their virtues. All classes stand in awe of the tla-quill-aughs' power or ill will, and their opinions have much influence in most matters. They are consulted in all cases of sickness. All classes avoid, as much as possible, giving them offence, from a belief that they have the power of throwing, as they express it, their bad medicine at them, whether far or near, present or absent. The people believe they can converse with the good and the bad spirits; and the tla-quill-aughs, on their part, make it their chiefest study to impose on popular credulity, leading others to credit what they do not believe themselves.

During our stay among these people, it sometimes happened that the tla-quill-aughs were offended with us for our want of faith. On such occasions, the other Indians, seeing us act with so much unconcern in matters which they considered so hazardous to ourselves, would stare at our ignorance, and look on us as the barbarians of old did on St. Paul when the viper fastened on his hand, expecting every moment to see us fall down dead!

From what has now been said on the subject, the reader will no doubt at once conclude that the tla-quill-aughs are of all men the most happy. Let him not, however, be deceived, but look upon them as of all men the most miserable. Every misfortune, sudden death, mishap, or unexpected disaster that happens to any of the people, is immediately attributed to some tla-quill-augh, and he, however innocent, pays with his life for the calamity. On whomsoever the imagination fixes, be he far or near, he is secretly hunted out, waylaid, and put to death; and this is generally the fate of all of them!

When any person is dangerously ill, a tla-quill-augh is consulted, and the price of his services fixed, without his ever seeing the patient. As soon, therefore, as this preliminary part of the business is arranged, the price agreed upon is forthwith sent to his abode, and he repairs to the sick person and begins his operations. He is always paid beforehand—that payment being according to the quality of the sick person; and it is believed that the more is given the sooner and the better will be the case. It is no wonder, therefore, that they should be liberal on such occasions; but if the patient dies the fee is all returned again.

When the tla-quill-augh enters the wigwam or lodge, he views the patient with an air of affected gravity, such as we see some of our own doctors assume on entering the dwelling of a sick person, and tells the bystanders, with a shake of the head and a groan, that the case is a very bad one, and that without him the patient would have surely died. The first thing he then does is to paint himself; and while this is going on he keeps constantly eyeing the patient, ties up his head with a leather strap and his waist with a thong, then lays the patient on his back, takes a piece of strong line, and girds him round the waist as tight as possible; in which position he is not allowed to stir, or to receive any kind of nourishment, until the whole ceremony is ended, which lasts for upwards of three hours every morning and evening until there is a change; and I have known them for weeks together to continue the business without intermission, when it would be hard to tell whether the doctor or the patient was most exhausted.

After the patient is thus placed, the tla-quill-augh, standing over him in a stooping position, bends down, and with his whole force presses him with his two fists in the pit of the stomach, as if intending to push through his body; then, suddenly standing up again, he opens his fists, and keeps blowing through his fingers, every now and then ejaculating a short prayer in a loud and frantic manner, stamping with his feet, blowing with his mouth, and making various gesticulations with his body and arms, always ending the last sentence, in a tremulous voice and quaver of the lips, in these words—"Ho! ho! ho! ho! oh! oh!" All this, the doctor says, is necessary to drive away the evil spirit, for he must be expelled before a cure can be effected! The moment the bad spirit is gone out of the sick person, the tla-quill-augh sucks the part affected with his mouth to extract the bad blood through the pores of the skin, which, to all appearance, he does effectually. How he manages to do it I know not; but I have often watched him, and seen him throw out whole mouthfuls of blood, and yet not the least mark would appear on the skin. I have also examined the tla-quill-augh's mouth, supposing he might have cut it, but I could never discover anything of the kind. By the colour and quantity of the blood he announces the character of the disease. He goes through the same ceremony with various parts of the body till he expels the evil spirit altogether; or if he fails to do so, and the patient dies, he fixes the death on some rival in the profession.

Having now detailed the course pursued by the honest and zealous tla-quill-augh himself, we next come to describe the accompaniment performed by his assistants. The moment the tla-quill-augh commences his operations, four other persons, men and women indiscriminately, are placed in the same wigwam with the doctor and the sick person, two and two, face to face—that is, opposite to each other, and sitting tailor fashion, with a small stick in each hand. Between these four persons is then laid, flat on the ground, a piece of wood about eight feet long, and on this they keep beating time with their sticks in a loud and noisy manner, singing all the while; but the moment the tla-quill-augh comes to the words

"Ho, ho, ho!" the assistants who keep drumming on the piece of wood stop singing, and with their sticks beat one, two, three, for three successive times, by way of an *amen* to the doctor's invocations. Then silence ensues for about two minutes, when the whole commences anew, and so on to the end of the ceremony, which, as I have already said, continues every morning and evening about three hours.

The noise made by drumming on the stick, in conjunction with the tla-quill-augh's hallooing, is intended to frighten away the evil spirit, and prepare the patient for medicine; so that, between the doctor's bawling and stamping, and the drummer's beating and singing, the noise may be heard a quarter of a mile round. With all this absurdity, many extraordinary cures are performed by these people. They have a profound knowledge of all simples, and if the complaint be manifest, as in cases of cuts and wounds, or the like, their skill is really astonishing. I once saw an Indian who had been nearly devoured by a grizzly bear, and had his skull split open in several places, and several pieces of the bone taken out just above the brain, and measuring three-fourths of an inch in length, cured so effectually by one of these jugglers, that in less than two months after he was riding on his horse again at the chase. I have also seen them cut open the belly with a knife, extract a large quantity of fat from the inside, sew up the part again, and the patient soon after perfectly recovered. The bite of the rattlesnake they cure effectually; and as to vomits, purges, decoctions, and the knowledge of phlebotomy, none can be more expert and successful than the tla-quill-aughs; and I have witnessed two or three cases, which baffled the skill of a regular surgeon, cured by them.

The diseases most frequent among these people, are indigestion, fluxes, asthmas, and consumptions. Instances of longevity are here and there to be found among them, but not very often.

From the doctor we now turn to the gambler. Play or gambling is a favourite pastime among all classes of the Oakinackens. The principal game is called tsill-all-a-come, differing but little from the chall-chall played by the Chinooks or Indians along the sea-coast. This game is played with two small, oblong, polished bones, each two inches long, and half an inch in diameter, with twenty small sticks of the same diameter as the bones, but about nine inches long.

The game does not set any limits to the number of players at a time, provided both sides be equal. Two, four, or six, as may be agreed upon, play this game; but, in all large bets, the last number is generally adopted. When all is ready, and the property at stake laid down on the spot, the players place themselves in the following manner: the parties kneel down, three on one side, and three on the other, face to face, and about three feet apart; and in this position they remain during the game. A piece of wood is then placed on the ground between them: this done, each player is furnished with a small drum-stick, about the size of a rule, in his right hand, which stick is used for beating time on the wood, in order to rivet attention on the game. The drumming is always accompanied with a song. The players, one and all, muffle their wrists, fists, and fingers with bits of fur or trapping, in order the better to elude and deceive their opponents. Each party then takes one of the two small polished bones, and ten of the small sticks, the use of which will hereafter be more fully explained. In all cases the arms and body are perfectly naked, the face painted, the hair clubbed up, and the head girt round with a strap of leather. The party is now ready to begin the game, all anxious and on the alert: three of the players on one side strike up a song, to which all keep chorus, and this announces the commencement. The moment the singing and drumming begin on one side, the greatest adept on the other side instantly takes the little polished bone, conceals it in one of his fists, then throws it into the other, and back again, and so on from one fist to the other, nimbly crossing and recrossing his arms, and every instant changing the position of his fists. The quickness of the motions and the muffling of the fists make it almost impossible for his opponents to guess which hand holds the bone, and this is the main point. While the player is manœuvring in this manner, his three opponents eagerly watch his motions with an eagle's eye, to try and discover the fist that contains the bone; and, the moment one of them thinks he has discovered where the bone is, he points to it with the quickness of lightning: the player at the same time, with equal rapidity, extends his arm and opens his fist in the presence of all; if it be empty, the player draws back his arm and continues, while the guesser throws the player one of the little sticks, which counts one. But if the guesser hits upon the fist that contains the bone, the player throws a stick to him and ceases playing, his opponent now going through the same operation: every miss costs a stick on either side. It is not the best of three, but three times running: all the sticks must be on one side to finish the game. I have seen them for a whole week at one game, and then not conclude, and I have known the game decided in six hours.

It sometimes happens, however, that after some days and nights are spent in the same game, neither party gains: in that case, the rules of the game provide that the number of players be either increased or diminished; or, if all the parties be agreed, the game is relinquished, each party taking up what it put down: but so intent are they on this favourite mode of passing their time, that it seldom happens that they separate before the game is finished; and while it is in progress every other consideration is sacrificed to it: and some there are who devote all their time and means solely to gambling; and when all is lost, which is often the case, the loser seldom gives way to grief. They are a happy people, never repining at what cannot be remedied. Various other games and amusements occupy their time: among which, the females have several that are innocent and amusing; but singing and dancing are their delight, and in these they often indulge to excess.

Next we come to the description of their hot baths, or rather fiery trial. To construct one of these baths a good deal of trouble and labour is required. A hole, fifteen feet in diameter, and about four feet deep, is dug in some convenient place for wood and water. The hole is then covered over with a thick coat of earth, as close as possible, leaving only a small aperture or opening in one side, barely sufficient to admit a single person to creep in and out on all fours. This done, a pile of wood, with a considerable number of stones laid thereon, is set on fire in the centre; and when the wood is consumed, and the stones red hot, water is thrown over them, causing a dense vapour and intense heat; yet in the midst of this suffocating cloud, where one would suppose a salamander itself could hardly live, the Indians enter stark naked, and no sooner in than the aperture or hole is closed upon them. Here they keep singing and recounting their war adventures, and invoking the good spirit to aid them again, rolling and groaning all the time in this infernal cell for nearly an hour; when all at once they bound out one by one, like so many subterranean spectres issuing from the infernal regions. Besmeared with mud, and pouring down with sweat, they dash into the cold water, and there plunge and swim about for at least a quarter of an hour, when they return again to their cell, going through this fiery trial twice—morning and evening—on all great occasions. On all occasions of peace or war; of success in their enterprises, and good luck in hunting, the bath is resorted to. In short, great virtues are supposed to arise from the regular observance of this general custom of purification.

In the wide field of gymnastic exercise, few Indians—I might say none—have been found to cope with civilized man. In all trials of walking, of running, of fatigue, feats of agility, and famine, even in the Indian's own country, he has to yield the palm of victory to the white man. In the trials of the hot bath alone the savage excels.

The ceremony of the bath is not peculiar to the Oakinackens: it is practised by all the aboriginal tribes on the American continent.

## CHAPTER XX.

**Social habits—Winter habitations—Economy of the winter—Summer employments—Collecting of food—Fish barriers—Salmon—Division of labour—Roots and berries—Scenes at the fish camp—Mode of catching the deer—Preparation of food—Furnaces or ovens—Implements of warfare—Spampt, how made—Pine moss—Bread, how prepared—Great war-dance—Manner of fighting—Treaties of peace—Scalps—Slaves—Funeral ceremonies—Mode of interment—Graves—Superstitions—Emblems—Customs—Mourning—Punishments—Sedate habits and docile dispositions.**

THEIR winter habitations are constructed chiefly of mats and poles, covered over with grass and earth; and are made very commodious, comfortable, and roomy. The inside being dug about a foot or two below the surface of the ground, a precaution which adds much to their warmth. They are invariably open at the ridge pole all along, and the reason is obvious; for without any chimney, the smoke by this means has a free vent upwards. These lodgings resemble in appearance the roof of a common dwelling-house removed from the walls and placed on the ground; the fires are made in the centre, directly under the ridge pole, and about six or eight feet apart, and are in proportion to the number of families who live under the same roof; each family having generally one fire. The doors are but few, and situate to suit convenience; in the front, in the back, or the gable ends, and are merely oblong holes, over which mats are suspended by means of a wooden hinge, which mat or door must be lifted up and down every time a person goes in or out.

Although these dwellings have neither partition nor division in any of them, yet the property of each individual, the privacy of each family, and the place each occupies, are so well secured and ascertained as to afford to a rude people all the advantages, and even conveniences of a more complicated building. These dwellings are generally long and narrow, and contain each from one to five or six families, whose winter supplies of provisions are considered as one common stock, and as such are served out in winter by each family in turn, until the whole is consumed.

We must now relate the manner in which these people pass the summer season, and provide food for the winter. As soon as the snow begins to disappear in the spring, the winter camps break up, and the whole tribe disperse here and there into small parties or families; and in this unsettled manner they wander about till the middle of June, when they all assemble again in large bands on the banks of the different rivers, for the purpose of fishing during the summer season. Here, then, their fish barriers are constructed, by the united labour of the whole village or camp assembled in one place. The salmon being then in the utmost abundance, no sooner are the barriers finished than one or more of the principal men are appointed, by general consent, to superintend each. The person or persons thus chosen divide the fish every morning, and settle all matters respecting the barrier and fish for the current year. Their authority is law in all those matters till the end of the fishing season, which is generally about the beginning of October. During the season the camp is divided into four parties, for the various purposes of daily life, and of laying in a stock of food for the approaching winter. The men are divided into two parties; one for hunting, and the other for fishing: and of the women also, one party cure the fish, another collect roots and berries. All these different productions are dried and seasoned in the sun, and require much attention and labour. The fish when properly cured is packed up into large bundles or bales; the roots and berries into bags made of rushes. The stock for the winter, thus daily and weekly produced, is then, during the nights, conveyed in secret, and put in *caches;* that is, hidden under ground among the rocks; each family having its share apart, secure from wild beasts and the eye of thieves. During the continuance of the fish season, the Indian camp is all life. Gambling, dancing, horse-racing, and frolicking, in all its varied forms, are continued without intermission; and few there are, even the most dull and phlegmatic, who do not feel, after enjoying so much hilarity, a deep regret on leaving the piscatory camp on these occasions.

As soon as the fish season is over, the Indians again all withdraw into the interior or mountains, as in the spring, and divide into little bands for the purpose of hunting the various animals of the chace. In their mode of ensnaring the deer and other animals, they are generally very successful. Exclusive of hunting these animals with their guns, bows, and arrows, and running them down with their horses, which latter practice is a favourite amusement, they frequently select a valley or favourable spot of ground between two mountains, having a narrow outlet or pass at one end; and the better to decoy the unwary game into it, bushes are planted on each side of the pass, contracting, as it were, the passage as it advances into the form of a funnel, until, at the outlet, it becomes quite narrow. Here the animals, being pressed forward by their pursuers, fall an easy prey to those who in ambush await their arrival, and by whom they are generally all killed while struggling to extricate themselves from the snare.

The Indians, after passing a month or six weeks in this roving state, congregate again into large bands for the purpose of passing the winter on the banks of small rivers, where wood is convenient and plentiful. During this season they remain in their habitations, constructed as already described; nor do they break up their winter camps till about the 1st of February. During this cold and tedious period, they chiefly subsist on the stock laid in during the summer season, and in severe winters, when little can be obtained from the chace, they are reduced to great extremes before the snow disappears, or the spring invites them to rove about again.

Their food is boiled in watape kettles, a mode common to all the aborigines throughout the continent. The process is simple, and similar to that practised by the Chinooks and other tribes along the Pacific. The dish or kettle being placed on the ground, and nearly filled with water, the meat, fish, or other viand, is cut or torn into small pieces, and after being put into the kettle, some heated stones, by the help of a wooden tongs, are immediately thrown in also, which is no sooner done than the water in the dish is in a state of ebullition. After a few minutes' boiling the stones are taken out and instantly replaced by others, also red hot, which second set generally suffices to complete the process. The contents are then served up, and each individual receives his portion on a piece of bark or mat. The broth, in which the food is boiled, is likewise carefully dealt round with a wooden ladle into bark or wooden dishes, and is, with all the ashes and dirt incident to the process, considered as the most delicious part of the repast. Their culinary vessels are seldom washed or cleaned. The dog's tongue is the only dish-cloth known.

Roots and vegetables of every description are cooked during the summer by means of furnaces in the open air; they are then baked on stones, formed into small cakes, and dried in the sun, after which the whole is carefully laid by for winter use. And while speaking of a furnace and baking, we ought not to omit stating how they bake their bread, and what kind of bread they generally make use of.

On the pines of this country there is a dark brown moss which collects or grows about the branches.

This moss is carefully gathered every autumn, when it has the appearance of dirty coarse wool. It is soaked in water, pressed hard together, and then cooked in an oven or furnace, from which it comes forth in large sheets like slate, but supple and pliable, resembling pieces of tarpauling, black as ink, and tasteless; and when cut with a knife it has a spotted or marbled appearance, owing to the number of small sprigs of wood, bark, or other extraneous substances, unavoidably collected with the moss in taking it from the trees. This cake when dried in the sun becomes as hard as flint, and must always be soaked in water before use. It is generally eaten with the raw fat o animals, as we use bread and butter. It is viscous and clammy in the mouth, with but little taste. Thus prepared it will keep for years; is much liked by the natives, and sometimes eaten by the whites. It is called squill-ape.

We now come to their warlike weapons and manner of fighting. Generally speaking, they are rather a trafficking commercial people than a nation of warriors; yet, when called to war, they are resolute and brave.

Their implements of warfare are guns, bows, and arrows (in the use of which they are very expert), shields, knives, and lances, and a bludgeon, for close combat, called spampt. This deadly weapon is made in the following manner:—A piece of hard wood, about nine inches long, and half an inch in diameter, of a cylindrical form, resembling a short rule, is tightly covered over with a piece of raw hide, which being large at one end forms a bag, in which is enclosed a round stone of the size of a goose-egg. This has the appearance of a ball at the end of the staff: the space between them about an inch, serving as a joint; the other end is tied round the wrist of the right hand with a thong. An Oakinacken thus accoutred, and mounted on his fleetest steed, is ready for action.

The hot bath, council, and ceremony of smoking the great pipe before war, is always religiously observed. Their laws, however, admit of no compulsion, nor is the chief's authority implicitly obeyed on these occasions; consequently, every one judges for himself, and either goes or stays as he thinks proper. With a view, however, to obviate this defect in their system, they have instituted the dance, which answers every purpose of a recruiting service. As soon, therefore, as war is resolved upon, a large ring or circle is marked out, into which the war chief enters; the belligerent declaration is published in a loud voice, and the great war-dance commenced, which is carried on with much spirit and shouting; every man, therefore, who enters within this ring, and joins in the dance, thereby pledges himself, and is, according to the laws of the tribe, in honour bound to assist in carrying on the war, or in other words, is a soldier, and bound to obey the great war chief.

Stratagem and ambuscade, so peculiar to all savages, is always resorted to by these people, who dislike an open attack; and for the want of proper discipline and subordination, never stand face to face in the fight if they can avoid it. If they fail to surprise their enemy in the darkness of night, or the dawn of morning, which is their favourite mode of attack, they skirmish at a distance, occasionally dashing at full speed near enough to have a flying shot at each other, without any kind of order, shouting and yelling all the time in the most wild and frantic mannet, capering and cowering on their horses to evade their adversaries' fire. If one on either side happens to fall, a rush is made for the scalp, which brings the foes into close contact. The firing with guns then ceases, and the quick shooting of arrows commences; but the arrows soon cease also, and the spear comes into play; but this in turn is soon laid aside, and gives place to the bloody knife and deadly spampt. These are the last weapons used, except, perhaps, a few random shots at retiring. This last stage of the encounter or conflict is often severely contested, but does not last long. The moment a chief or principal man falls, fighting gives place to mourning; they get discouraged, and instantly fly without disgrace, and the battle is ended.

The number slain on these occasions is comparatively few; and when the conquerors bear off in barbarous triumph a dozen of scalps or so, it is thought a great victory. Their treaties of peace, though made with the utmost solemnity, are but the words of children, no sooner uttered than forgotten. With all this barbarity, however, they are kind and indulgent to their slaves. War not being their trade, there are but few slaves among them, and these few are adopted as children, and treated in all respects as members of the family.

Next in order are their funeral ceremonies, mourning, and manner of interment. When a chief, or other principal personage, is on his deathbed, he is surrounded by his relatives, who observe a strict silence and calm indifference while the zealous tlaquill-augh goes through the solemnities of his office; but the moment the patient dies, the house or lodge is abandoned, and loud clamorous mourning commences: the whole camp, during the first burst of lamentation, join in the tumultuous uproar. This lasts for some hours without intermission, and then gives way to a dead silence; during which the body, wrapped in a new garment, is removed to the open air, and the house or lodge is razed to the ground. Every now and then the mourning bursts forth anew. The moment one begins, the whole instantly join; the cry being reinforced by the howling of dogs and screaming of children. A few hours after death the body is interred. For this purpose, a round hole is dug in some convenient spot, and the body is placed in a sitting posture, but inclining a little backwards, with the knees raised up nearly to the breast. All the most valuable trinkets and trophies of war possessed by the deceased are laid on his breast, supported by his knees, and interred along with the body. If any of these articles be withheld from the grave, the spirit of the deceased, according to the popular belief, can never be at rest; consequently, the custom is religiously observed. After the grave is filled up with earth and stones, a small pile of wood is placed over it, and several articles are suspended from the pile, indicating the quality of the deceased. If he be a warrior, the bow and scalp mark his grave; if a hunter, an animal is portrayed thereon; the spear and salmon in like manner point out the fisherman's place of rest. Immediately after the interment, all the valuable property, such as horses, guns, bows, and other things not put into the grave, are destroyed and scattered around it as a sacrifice. The near relations then cut their hair short, scarify their flesh, besmear their faces and bodies, clothe themselves in old tattered garments, and abandon themselves to excessive mourning for many months together; strictly taking care not to mention the name of the deceased.

If a husband dies, the widow, according to custom, must remain two years single; during which time she never paints, combs her hair, nor puts on new clothing. After some months, their loud lamentation is confined to the morning and evening; but in their grief, during the first months, they howl incessantly and desperately, as if excess of grief were to be measured by excess of noise. Yet no sooner are these wild fits over than they seem all of a sudden to forget their anguish, and at once resume a tranquil, placid, and cheerful countenance.

They have no place appropriated for the reception of the dead; but their graves are generally on some eminence, rocky ground, or stony place, and the spot is always held sacred.

Among these people there are no regular punishments instituted for crimes or offences of any kind; yet all transgressions are cognizable and punished by their laws, so as to ensure security to life and property. Theft, in particular, is held in the utmost abhorrence, so that it rarely occurs among them.

The property of each individual, even of the slave, is held sacred.

They perfectly understand the nature of barter and traffic, and may be called, in their way, a commercial and trading people; but, like all Indians, they cannot resist the temptation of European articles, and will give everything they possess for the toys and trifles of the whites. They are a sedate and docile people, and very susceptible of improvement, and could, with comparatively little trouble, I am confident, be brought round to a state of civilization. Their superstitions seem to be the only barrier between them and the attainment of a more refined state.

## CHAPTER XXI.

**Calculation of time—Singular manner of naming children—Peculiar modes of address—Anecdote of an Indian chief—Indian forbearance—Conduct of the whites in Indian countries—Comparison of crime between Indians and whites—Manner of swaddling infants—Hardships during infancy—Savage customs—Indian constitution—Chief cause of scanty population—A day's journey—Calculation of distance—Rough roads—Indian ideas—Social habits—Some remarks on the system adopted for converting Indians to the Christian faith.**

In calculating time the Oakinackens invariably use their fingers, and go by tens. A common mode of counting with them is by snows or winters. Ask an Indian his age, he immediately casts his eyes on his hands, calculates his age by his fingers, and answers by holding so many of them up to view, each finger standing for ten years. Some of the most intelligent among them will reckon to a thousand tolerably correct; but by far the greater part can scarcely count twenty.

Contrary to the customs in civilized life, the children are never weaned until they give up the breast of their own accord, or another child is born to supplant the former; nor is the child ever hand-fed while at the breast, but lives solely on its mother's milk till old enough to feed itself. Yet the infant is generally robust and healthy; but the mother soon becomes an old woman. Here a singularity in their manners presents itself; for the child never receives a name till it has done sucking its mother's breast, and then it is named according to the disposition it evinced up till that time. If a male child, fractious and ill-humoured, it is named to please the ear, after some carnivorous bird or beast, such as the bear, the wolf, or the vulture; if, on the contrary, it be mild and quiet, it will be named after the deer, the rabbit, or the pheasant, so that the name generally indicates the temper; and while we are speaking of names, it may be proper to follow that subject a little farther, because it is one that generally forms a striking characteristic of Indian manners.

Indians of all classes change their names periodically, taking new ones according to fancy or caprice; and it is a peculiar habit, even a national custom, for the male and female children to address their parents in a manner peculiar to their sex, if I may so express myself, and to name their brothers and sisters according to their respective ages, as shall presently appear. To explain this rather knotty point, we shall suppose a family to consist of six children, three boys and three girls, besides the parents; and in order to make the thing as intelligible as possible, we shall again suppose that one of the boys—not the eldest, nor yet the youngest, but the middle one—is to address each of the other members of the family. The boy then says, En-leo, my father; Es-koy, my mother; En-ketch-eck, my elder brother; E-shentsa, my younger brother; El-kick-cha, my elder sister; El-shets-spo, my younger sister; E-she-she, my uncle; and Es-wa-wis-saw, my aunt. We shall now take the female in the same degree; that is, the middle one, who must say, En-mistem, my father; En-toume, my mother; El-keck-cha, my elder sister; El-shets-ops, my younger sister; El-kack-itsa, my elder brother; El-she-shentsa, my younger brother; Es-melt, my uncle; and Es-ta-ta-qua, my aunt.

Age and change of circumstance have great influence in causing change of names at different periods of life; but no change ever takes place in the above family mode of expression. During my first years among them, the chief went by the name of Its-kay-kay-etsa, or painted garment. After the death of the fox his father, he changed his name to Quill-quill-is-tshen-ach-can, or public speaker; and of late he has changed it again to that of Whist-as-ma-whey-kin, or the white bear, a name only assumed by chiefs or other great men; but in general these changes may be classed under three heads; one for youth, one for middle age, and one for old age.

On our travels one day, we overtook a party of Indians, when one of my men accosted the chief, calling him by name. The chief looked steadfastly at him, but made no reply. Being called again by name, he turned half round, and with a significant air, said, "You white people say you know all things; do you not then know that I have changed my name?" "No," said the man; "how could I know? for you change your names as often as the moon changes; but the whites, like the sun, never change." "And who made the moon?" said the Indian. "God, to be sure," rejoined the man. "And who made the sun?" continued the chief. "The same who made the moon," was the reply. "Then if God made us after the moon subject to change, and you after the sun unchangeable, why do you reproach us? In reproaching us, you reproach the master of life."

If you offend or even assault an Indian, he seldom resents at the moment, or shows any signs of violence or passion; but, on the contrary, he remains sullen, mute, and thoughtful. This forbearance, however, forebodes no good; for he broods over the insult or injury, and meditates revenge. Years may elapse, but the injury is still fresh in the savage breast; and there is but one way left for you to ward off the meditated blow, and regain his friendship, and that is, by a peace-offering or present; for here property pays for all offences.

If one Indian kills another, the murderer saves his own life by making a suitable present to the nearest relative of the deceased; and they draw no line of distinction between accidental or justifiable homicide and wilful murder: death caused in any way by another is looked upon in the same criminal light.

If a native flies into a passion with a white man, which is seldom the case, his passion or anger ought to be allowed to evaporate; and if you can muster patience enough to keep your temper till his rage is past, you can then do with him just what you please; for nothing subdues and reforms a savage more than patience and silence on your part while he is giving way to anger. Forbearance and even-handed justice are far more successful instruments in governing Indians than powder and ball. The confirmation of this statement will be found in the spectacle of the millions of aborigines that inhabit this quarter of the globe alone, and the comparatively few white men, not perhaps one to a thousand, who live among them. Yet the white man does not always observe the golden rule of forbearance and even-handed justice, but often arbitrarily arrogates the right of domineering over the natives; and yet these, in almost all cases, yield without a murmur. And to our shame be it said, that reason and right, humanity and forbearance, are as often to be found among the savages themselves as among the whites, who live by sufferance among them. The Indian in his natural state is happy, with his trader he is happy; but the moment he begins to walk in the path of the white man his happiness is at an end. Like a wild animal in a cage, his lustre is gone.

However strongly we may abhor heathenism, and deprecate the savage character in its natural state, as compared to civilized humanity, yet we ought not, in our zeal for the one or abhorrence of the other, to suppress the truth; and the truth, therefore, compels us to admit that there are many traits of virtue to be met with in the Indian character. They are brave, generous, and often charitable; and to their credit be it said, that there is less crime in an Indian camp of five hundred souls than there is in a civilized village of but half that number. Let the lawyer or moralist point out the cause.

Custom here constitutes law, not only in reference to the great affairs of the nation or tribe, but in trivial things also. A mother is not allowed to prepare swaddling-clothes for an unborn infant; and, indeed, but little preparation is required, for the whole paraphernalia consists of but four articles—a rude piece of board, which serves for a cradle; a bit of skin, which serves to wrap the new-born babe in; some moss to lie on; and a string to lash the whole together. Thus secured, the bantling is carried about on its mother's back, or allowed to sprawl on the ground, in all weathers and all seasons.

Tacitus found fault with the Roman ladies of his day for giving their children to Grecian women to nurse, and thus depriving the infant of maternal tenderness. What would the historian have thought had he seen an infant of the savage race, as practised in these parts, tied naked on a hard board, and allowed to tumble and roll about as it best could? and yet this very race, or portion of the human family, is as perfect in form, as healthy and vigorous, as any people on the face of the earth.

In travelling, the distance of places is always calculated according to time. If on horseback, a day's ride is estimated at about seventy of our miles; if on foot, at half that distance. This mode of calculating distances is, however, very erroneous, and not to be depended upon by the whites, as the natives seldom take into consideration either the good or bad state of the roads. But interruptions which are grievous obstacles to us are nothing in their way; for where a rabbit can pass, an Indian horse will pass, and where a horse can pass, the savage, who sticks on his back like a crab, passes over hill and dale, rock and ravine, at full speed; so that good roads or bad roads, rugged or smooth, all is alike to him.

Nor is the fair sex less dexterous in managing the horse; a woman with one child on her back and another in her arms will course the fleetest steed over the most rugged and perilous country. In conversation they seem to possess but few ideas, and their answer is often a gesture expressive of approbation or dislike; at other times, simply yes or no; and yet, in their national harangues, they often display great energy of mind, inspire confidence, and frequently give a strong impulse to public opinion.

While on their journeys, and indeed at all times, the men willingly aid in alleviating the hardships of the women, and are indulgent husbands. On all occasions they evince a steady and temperate disposition, and every action of their lives is more or less marked by intelligence and moderation.

Having now performed, however imperfectly, the task we had undertaken, and brought to a close our description of the Oakinacken nation, we shall proceed to make a few remarks on the moral and spiritual condition of these people, as a portion of the great family of mankind, as well as on the system generally pursued by missionaries in converting Indians to Christianity.

The Oakinackens are a people that might soon, and with but very little trouble, be induced to throw off their savage habits altogether, as they are reforming fast, and exhibit on most occasions a strong desire and capacity for receiving moral and religious instruction. The last time I visited them was in 1825, and it was encouraging to witness their continued improvement.

When we contemplate the wide field open before us for missionary labours, even between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, and the large sums yearly spent in various parts of the world for the purposes of instructing and converting the heathen, shall we not then hope and expect that at some future day those blessings may be extended to the Far West? Even a tithe of what is laid out in our country in England would, if rightly applied, be an inestimable blessing to these people. But the result would entirely depend on the manner in which the work of conversion was undertaken; and, with this impression on our minds, it seems to us expedient to make a few observations on the system generally followed in instructing and evangelizing the heathen in other parts of the world.

Where the rays of evangelical light beam forth, that light alone, if practically improved, will not only discover the errors of the past, but point out a remedy for the future. But the great evil is, hesitation takes the place of determination, and no person wishes to begin the work of reforming any great system which has been long in operation, and more particularly so if it be considered by its promoters as working well; but in a case such as the present, in which the whole world is more or less concerned, others as well as the actual promoters ought to have a voice, and every voice inculcating improvement ought to be respected: yet I am not vain enough to suppose that any opinion or representation of mine, however correct, will either reform the old or perfect the new system, because such things are not the work of a day nor of an individual; but if the suggestions now presented draw the attention of abler writers to the subject, I shall be satisfied.

The pious and charitable world contribute with a liberal hand; the missionary is sent out to the wilderness to instruct and convert the heathen: so far all is well. The missionary reaches his destination, announces the gospel tidings, and commences his official duties; the young and the old are catechised, baptism is administered, and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper follows—and all these different glimpses of evangelical light succeed each other in such rapid succession as to stamp the whole proceeding with the character of a miracle. The calm and reflecting observer is confounded, and the pious Christian is struck with astonishment at the hurried and precipitate manner in which the wild and untutored savage is thus washed from all his sins, and received into the bosom of the Christian church. In all this, however, there is nothing real; on the contrary, it is utterly impossible for the missionary, or any other man alive, to cultivate the soil, sow the seeds of gospel vegetation, and bring forth the matured fruits of regeneration in so short a time.

The missionary, in all this, no doubt follows his instructions.

But this is not all: the missionary's journal goes home, more labourers are required for the vineyard, periodicals circulate the marvellous success, and all the world, except those on the spot, believe the report. Yet the picture is delusive: the savage is still a savage, and gross idolatry and barbarism have not yielded inwardly a hair's-breadth to the influence of civilization, far less is he made sensible of the obligations imposed upon him by his new creed. It is but a treacherous calm before a storm: the tree is known by its fruit.

These reports are no sooner laid before the public, than a pious interest is again excited, and the liberal hand of charity is again cheerfully held out to aid in civilizing mankind. Other missionaries are sent forth, who, to prove their own zeal and success, heighten if possible the colouring of the former picture, by the addition of still more marvellous reports; and in this manner they go on, as it were, at full gallop, according to the present system, without taking time to dispel that thick and heavy cloud of ignorance and barbarism so necessary to be removed from the savage mind before it is prepared to receive spiritual instruction, or appreciate the benefits of Christianity. The result is scarcely a form of godliness, the time allowed being insufficient for perfecting the work, or doing it as it ought to be done; and this very want of time is chiefly the rock on which the missionary bark universally founders.

Before concluding this part of our subject, we might advert to another evil connected with the present system, and perhaps the worst of all evils, inasmuch as no effectual remedy can well be applied to it—that is, the interference of sects with one another; for no sooner does a missionary plant the standard of the Gospel in any foreign land, but others of different persuasions follow: and it is no uncommon thing to see, in many parts of the heathen world, Papists and Protestants, with all the different branches of the two great sects, like rivals in trade, huddled together, working confusion; not only distracting and corrupting their converts, but destroying in their obstinacy the fruits of each other's labour—forgetting that they are all God's husbandmen, labouring in the same vineyard, and for the same master.

Next to the British empire, few countries on the globe have pursued the present system with more success than the Americans have done; yet the Americans themselves have found from long experience, as they now declare, that the system is defective, that the results produced nowise correspond to the means employed: and the same observation may be applied to every other quarter of the earth.

Let us now consider the possibility of reforming this defective system. Considering the moral degradation of the heathen world, it behoves those who take an interest in changing the condition of the natural man, to apply the means best adapted for that purpose, and to recognise and avail themselves of every light that may in a practical way hold out a prospect of success; and if they do so, they will neither slight nor contemn, without an impartial and patient investigation, any suggestions that may be offered with the view of forwarding the great and benevolent work of salvation.

In the first place, then, all men generally know, and history bears testimony to the fact, that Indians, whether of the open plains or of the deserts, universally rove about from place to place, like beasts of prey, without any settled or permanent home. To counteract this habit ought to be the first step taken in order to bring about a healthy state of civilization, without which the missionary labours in vain: but this is not the work of an hour, nor of a day, but of years—I should have said generations; and time proportionate to the work must be allowed, moral restraints must gradually be imposed, and the savage, in place of his former precarious mode of living, must be taught not only to feel the wants, but to appreciate the blessings resulting from settled habits and practical industry; he must be taught to cultivate the ground, and be convinced from experience that his living and comforts are more certain from the soil than from the chace, before he can be brought a step farther: but according to the present system, in place of locating the Indians, as a preliminary step, and accustoming them to habits of industry and social order, the zealous missionary at once commences his course of religious instruction, without any step of the kind; and, while the savages have anything to eat, all goes on well, but the moment a new supply of food is required, that moment they disperse in all directions, according to their usual habits, leaving the missionary alone, and perhaps months may elapse before they again reassemble on praying ground, losing to-day what they had gained yesterday; and this is generally the course pursued—a course productive of social evil and moral deterioration.

What are the qualifications of the men generally sent out for the purpose of converting the heathen? These men have seldom any other recommendation than a knowledge of books; they are ignorant of the language, habits, and feelings of the people they have gone to convert, and have little experience in human nature: this alone is of itself sufficient to protract and retard, if not to frustrate altogether, the working of the system satisfactorily. In every quarter of the globe there are not wanting, if sought after, pious and philanthropic men, possessing the advantages of long and close personal intercourse with the natives of almost all countries. These are the men to be selected and sent out as pioneers among the heathen—men who might, from their local experience, at once infuse the elements of much good by their presence and example; and if such men cannot always be found, persons possessing at least a general knowledge of mankind, as well as of books, can. The work requires practical as well as pious men to set things a-going during the first probationary time; for I would wish it to be distinctly understood that religious instruction should not be mixed up with the primary part of the plan at all; but may be introduced at any subsequent period, according to circumstances, as soon, but no sooner, than the degrading influence of the savage character begins to yield to the more genial and rational habits of civilized life. For one of the greatest evils in the present system is, that men generally begin where they ought to end. They commence with religion before the heart is prepared to receive it. A thing easily got is thought but little of: religion must therefore be kept for some time, as it were, at a distance from them; they must be taught to feel the want of it; they must ask for it; and they must be prepared to receive it with all thanksgiving.

The preparatory part of the plan, as regards time, ought, as I have already stated, to be regulated according to circumstances; but when a new field is opened for missionary labours, I cannot convince myself that a shorter period than ten years' location of the tribe or nation, under civilized guidance, would be sufficient to remove the deep-rooted apathy of the savage, and prepare his mind for religious instruction; or perhaps it would be still nearer the mark to adopt the more general opinion on this point, and that is, that an age is not too long for assembling, locating, training, and instructing the savage in the habits of civilization, industry, and economy, before introducing even public schools among them; another age under scholastic discipline might be required to prepare them for the next and most important step; and in the third generation only might religion, as practised in civilized life, be thoroughly introduced with effect among them. This would be laying the basis of a solid and permanent plan.

In reference to the missionary himself, whose pious work is the conversion of souls, the apostle reminds us, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace;" and while the missionary follows, in all its purity, the work of faith and labour of love, all men are in charity bound to contribute to his assistance, and aid in bringing about, by the application of appointed means, the great work of salvation; but then, to encourage all men to do so, the missionary, like the apostles of old, who in simplicity and godly sincerity told their Lord and master "what they had done, and what they had taught," ought to tell his masters, with the same simplicity and uprightness, what he has done, and what he has taught, without exaggeration or any false colouring. This course would indeed inspire confidence, and give such a direction and impetus to popular opinion as would lead all to co-operate for the good of mankind.

But the missionary at home and the missionary abroad are two distinct characters; the latter, from his position and the influence he acquires over the general conduct, as well as consciences, of the simple and ignorant people with whom he lives, and who on every occasion look up to him for advice in temporal as well as for instruction in spiritual matters, of course becomes a great man, not only in their estimation, but in his own also, till at last the force of habit gains an ascendancy over him, and often leads him astray from the path of evangelical duty. He is no longer the humble and zealous disciple he was when he left home, but considers himself the chief man in civil as well as in religious matters.

But the paramount evil which frustrates all the labours of the missionary is that arising from sects of different persuasions interfering with one another, an evil which tends rather to destroy than promote religious feelings among savages, and which nothing less than the potent arm of Government can prevent; for it is no uncommon thing in the wilderness to see the pious and persevering evangelist, after undergoing every hardship to open a new field for his labours among the heathen, followed after by some weak zealot of another sect, who had not energy or courage of himself to lead, but who no sooner reaches the cultivated vineyard of his precursor than he begins the work of demoralization and injustice, by denying the creed and labours of his predecessor, clothes some disaffected chief, and infuses animosity and discord among all parties, in order to get a footing and establish himself; and where envy and strife are, according to the apostle's doctrine, there are "confusion and every evil work;" and every additional zealot of a different creed in this field of strife increases the disorder, for all Indians are peculiarly fond of novelty; consequently, the last creed is with them the best. Now where there are two, three, or more conflicting creeds at one station, as is often the case, it may truly be said, there is neither religion nor religious fellowship to be found in that community; but, on the contrary, every moral and religious sentiment is destroyed, and the people are sunk deeper and deeper in the gulf of moral degradation; and not only that, but the missionaries, one and all, labour in vain. Yet, strange as it may appear, such unhallowed and demoralizing scenes seldom reach either the public eye or the public ear; for the missionary or zealot of each sect, in writing home to the parent society, so far from noticing and reporting, with official uprightness, the true state of things, cheats the public by exhibiting a picture of marvellous success. Solomon hath declared that "he that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity." Surely there ought to be some law existing to protect and secure to the first missionary the fruits of his enterprize and pious labour against all such corrupt and impious interference.

To exemplify this part of our subject still further: I was once travelling along the frontiers of Canada, when I came to a neat little Indian village, on the bank of the St. Lawrence, containing about three hundred souls. They had a missionary, a little white chapel, and a thriving school, and I thought them at the time, as they also considered themselves, perfectly comfortable and happy. Three years afterwards, a friend of mine happened to pass through the same village; but in place of finding them happy as they had been, everything in and about the place was changed. The inhabitants were less numerous: instead of one missionary and one church, they had, during the short interval, got three missionaries, all of different persuasions, and three churches; but so high did the tide of religious animosity among all parties then run, that one of the churches had been recently burnt to the ground, by some of the fanatics themselves; another was despoiled of all its ornaments, and deserted; and the third remained, a sad memento of the times, with but few hearers: and in place of one thriving school, there had been no less than three, but with scarcely a scholar in any of them. Such are the fruits that generally result from the unhallowed practice of one sect interfering with another.

# APPENDIX.

## CHINOOK VOCABULARY.

| | |
|---|---|
| One | Ight. |
| Two | Muxt. |
| Three | Thlune. |
| Four | Lakat. |
| Five | Quinum. |
| Six | Tuchum. |
| Seven | Sinamuxt. |
| Eight | Istought-tekin. |
| Nine | Quie-est. |
| Ten | Eattathlelum. |
| Eleven | Eattathlelum equin ight. |
| Twelve | Eattathlelum equin muxt. |
| Thirteen | Eattathlelum equin thlune. |
| Fourteen | Eattathlelum equin lakat. |
| Fifteen | Eattathlelum equin quinum. |
| Sixteen | Eattathlelum equin tuchum. |
| Seventeen | Eattathlelum equin sinamuxt. |
| Eighteen | Eattathlelum equin istought-tekin. |
| Nineteen | Eattathlelum equin quie-est. |
| Twenty | Muxt-thlalth. |
| Twenty-one | Muxt-thlalth equin ight. |
| Twenty-two | Muxt-thlalth equin muxt. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Twenty-three | Muxt-thlalth equin thlune. |
| Twenty-four | Muxt-thlalth equin lakat. |
| Twenty-five | Muxt-thlalth equin quinum. |
| Twenty-six | Muxt-thlalth equin tuchum. |
| Twenty-seven | Muxt-thlalth equin sinamuxt. |
| Twenty-eight | Muxt-thlalth equin istought-tekin. |
| Twenty-nine | Muxt-thlalth equin quie-est. |
| Thirty | Thlune-thlalth. |
| Thirty-one | Thlune-thlalth equin ight. |
| Thirty-two | Thlune-thlalth equin muxt. |
| Thirty-three | Thlune-thlalth equin thlune. |
| Forty | Lakat-thlalth. |
| Fifty | Quinum-thlalth. |
| Sixty | Tuchum-thlalth. |
| Seventy | Sinamuxt-thlalth. |
| Eighty | Istought-tekin-thlalth. |
| Ninety | Quie-est-thlalth. |
| One hundred | E-tha-ca-munack. |
| Two hundred | Muxt e-tha-ca-munack. |
| Three hundred | Thlune e-tha-ca-munack. |
| Four hundred | Lakat e-tha-ca-munack. |
| Five hundred | Quinum e-tha-ca-munack. |
| One thousand | Hi-oh. |
| Two thousand | Hi-oh hi-oh. |
| Three thousand | Hi-oh hi-oh hi-oh. |
| Four thousand | Hi-oh hi-oh hi-oh hi-oh. |
| Five thousand | Hi-oh hi-oh hi-oh hi-oh hi-oh. |
| Head | Thlam-eck-took. |
| Hair | Chlick-ax. |
| Eyes | Etsuck-out. |
| Eyebrows | Te-killikits-alepa. |
| Chin | Come-ach-ouetts. |
| Nose | Emeeats. |
| Mouth | Emets-kill. |
| Ears | Oak-cutsa. |
| Beard | Te-vū-vex. |
| Cheeks | Capala-ketanux. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Teeth | Ots-ats-ach. |
| Neck | Oak-quam-ux. |
| Face | Sheaugh-ouest. |
| Arms | Etispol-etick. |
| Fingers | Te-kux-ach. |
| Ribs | Telleman. |
| Shoulders | Ok-chak-chalea-quilea-matic. |
| Breasts | Emets-aughtick. |
| Back | Emeck-kuts-ach. |
| Belly | Eats-awanē. |
| Legs | Eatsou. |
| Feet | Tekick-acock. |
| Grandfather | Eock-acka. |
| Grandmother | Eye-kecḱa. |
| Father | Mamah. |
| Mother | Naha. |
| Uncle | Eyat-tessa. |
| Aunt | Elkitch-outcha. |
| Brother | A-u. |
| Sister | Ats. |
| Son | Etsicha. |
| Daughter | Oquè-cha. |
| Nephew | Ack. |
| Husband | Tlick-chall. |
| Wife | Oquack-ekull. |
| Brother-in-law | Ek-keck. |
| Sister-in-law | Oquetam. |
| Son-in-law | Exs-ech. |
| Daughter-in-law | Okuste. |
| Relations | Cap-whoo. |
| Lad | Equal-èsso. |
| Maiden | Ulick. |
| Boy | Ekass-cass. |
| Girl | Ok-thla-pelchech. |
| Fear | Quass. |
| Enemies | Il-keck-o-why-matick. |
| I *or* me | Nica. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Mine | Nissika. |
| You *or* thou | Mika. |
| Yours | Miss-ika. |
| He | Oeach. |
| She | Awaugh. |
| It | Ek-ek. |
| That | E-koch. |
| These | Ock-ock. |
| Here | Ek-koch. |
| Who | Tluxta. |
| They *or* them | Yaugh-ka. |
| And | Equin. |
| If | Sminich. |
| By-and-by | Alkè *or* quanà. |
| Where | Kach-e-walchoo. |
| That | Cat-ta. |
| When | Tshech. |
| Nothing | Onctan. |
| How many ? | Queen-tshech. |
| Yes | Aa. |
| No | Next *or* keyà. |
| That is it | Yough-ca. |
| Long ago | Ankatè. |
| Be quick | I-ake. |
| Just now | Alkè. |
| None | Canext. |
| More | Weught. |
| Little | Eenux. |
| Good | E-toukety. |
| Bad | Mass-atsy. |
| Chief | Tye-yea *or* Ecock-a-mana. |
| Slave | Slave, elitè *or* misache-mim. |
| Indians | Tilloch-cum. |
| Man | Col-el-achum. |
| Woman | Tlack-allè. |
| House | Tolth. |
| Horse | Keutan. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Dog | Camux. |
| Cat | Piss-piss. |
| Hog | Polobax. |
| It is true | Na-wetca. |
| Sit down | Meth-lite |
| Rise up | Echa-latsa. |
| Come here | Essa. |
| Go away | Alchoya. |
| Large | Eya-quantle. |
| Too small | Minich. |
| For what | Cat-the-ass. |
| Affection | Te-keigh. |
| Barter | Killemuck. |
| Idle talk | Kaltash wa-wa. |
| Perhaps | Thlun-ass. |
| Give it me | Thlum-èluta. |
| Falsehood | Ettlè-mena chute. |
| Sleep | Optètè. |
| Go off | Ach-ne-coyea. |
| Go to bed | Mahockste. |
| To-day | Chau. |
| Yesterday | Tanilkey. |
| To-morrow | Wo-chè. |
| Elk | Moluck. |
| Elk skin | Clemel. |
| Small deer | Wow-wich. |
| Canoe | Kineve. |
| Ship | Ma-ma-tle. |
| White people | Pa-she-shi-ooks. |
| River | Ick-hol. |
| Land | E-lè-hē. |
| Salmon | Equanna. |
| Sturgeon | Ulchy. |
| Gun | Suck-wall-allè. |
| Blanket | Pa-chichè-till-cup. |
| Blue cloth | Othlal-ough. |
| Red cloth | Pill-pill. |

| | |
|---|---|
| White | Till-cup. |
| Black or blue | Othlal-ough. |
| Axe | Kits-tan. |
| Knife | Opitch-ach. |
| Needle | Ke-pa-watt. |
| Beads | Cum-us-ack. |
| Kettle | Useun. |
| Wood | Ecskaun. |
| Chest | Ecskaun. |
| Bad weather | Ecusach. |
| Rain | Is-tau-ech. |
| Sun | U-laugh. |
| Moon | Ul-chey. |
| Night | Polackly. |
| Far off | Sciah. |
| Doctor | Keel-alley. |
| Good spirit | Econè. |
| Bad spirit | Ecutoch. |
| Heart | Eats-im-oughts. |
| Sick | Etsitsa. |
| It 's done | Hi-low. |
| Full | Pattle. |
| Swan | Ou-wucha. |
| Goose | Cal-a-cal-ama. |
| Duck | Oquech-quech. |
| Prophet | Etaminua. |
| Priest | Etaminua. |
| Sea-otter | Elackiè. |
| Land-otter | Enanamux. |
| Beaver | Enna. |
| Musk-rat | Eminticoo. |
| Bear | H-whoot. |
| Eat | Mack-amack. |
| Hungry | Oh-low. |
| I am hungry | Nica oh-low. |
| Bread | Chap-all-ell. |
| Water | Ill-chu |

| | |
|---|---|
| Take it | Eskam. |
| Fire | Uliptakè. |
| Hat | Ohe-a-pool. |
| Powder | Te-whoot. |
| To look | Nananitch. |
| What 's your name? | Cat-the-achal? |
| Shame | Nachamats. |
| Balls | Calcitan. |
| Strawberries | O'lèlè. |
| Raspberries | Amute. |
| Potatoes | Wapatoe. |
| Sweet onions | Ulalach. |
| A present | Patlatch. |
| To make | Makouke. |
| Iron | Chick-amen. |
| Brass-wire | Thack-alle. |
| Medicine | Eptl-ach. |
| Buttons | Cill-cill. |
| Steal | Capshewalla. |
| Understand | Each-e-chimley. |
| To speak | Kep-all-oulaw. |
| Great many | Hi-oh. |
| Capot | Capawillaughtè. |
| The same | Quack-ick-qua. |
| Game | Chal-e-chall. |
| Handsome | Etoughtey. |
| Herrings | Owl-chans. |
| Tobacco | Cay-nult. |
| How many whites? | Queentshech pashashiooks? |

Besides the foregoing language, there is another lingo, or rather mixed dialect, spoken by the Chinook and other neighbouring tribes; which is generally used in their intercourse with the whites. It is much more easily learned, and the pronunciation more agreeable to the ear than the other, as will appear from the annexed specimen.

| | |
|---|---|
| Great chief | Hias tye-yea. |
| Slave | Miss-che-miss. |
| Woman | Tlutchè-men. |
| Child | Tunass. |
| Good | Tlòsh, |
| Bad | Pishack. |
| No | Wake. |
| Trade | Mackouk. |
| Canoe | Chippota. |
| Very little | Ta-an-ass. |
| Balls | Poll-alley. |
| Sea-otter | Quatluck. |
| It's true | Na-wetkaha. |
| How are you? | Thla choea. |
| To speak | Wa-wa. |
| What | Ick-etta. |
| Might | Polackley. |
| Come here | Chicko. |
| Go away | Thlat-away. |
| By-and-bye | Winnippiè. |
| Understand | Come-a-tax. |
| Big *or* large | Hi-ass, |
| Rain | Snass. |
| Ship | Shippo. |
| Good spirit | Is-co-com. |
| Come in | Meth-lite. |
| I love you | Tekeigh. |
| Game | Omintick. |
| What are you going to trade? | Ick-etta mika mackouk? |
| By-and-bye I'll come again | Winnippiè nica chicko. |

## A TABLE OF THE WEATHER AT THE MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER, FROM MARCH 22ND TILL JULY 22ND, 1811.

| Month and Year. | | Winds. | State of the Weather. | Wet Days. | Dry Days. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1811. | | | | | |
| March | 22 | S.W. | Snow and hail ........ | 1 | — |
| — | 23 | W. | Snow and rain ........ | 1 | — |
| — | 24 | S.W. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 25 | S.W. | Moderate ............ | — | 1 |
| — | 26 | W. | Fog and rain ........ | 1 | — |
| — | 27 | W. | Clear ............. | — | 1 |
| — | 28 | S.W. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 29 | E. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 30 | W. | Some snow .......... | 1 | — |
| — | 31 | S.W. | Clear weather ........ | — | 1 |
| April | 1 | W. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 2 | W. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 3 | S.W. | Clear and dry ......... | — | 1 |
| — | 4 | W. | Clear ............. | — | 1 |
| — | 5 | E. | Clear ............ | — | 1 |
| — | 6 | S.W. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 7 | N. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 8 | S.W. | Foggy ............. | 1 | — |
| — | 9 | S.W. | Clear ............. | — | 1 |
| — | 10 | S.W. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 11 | W. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 12 | N. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 13 | N. | Heavy fog........... | 1 | — |
| — | 14 | S.W. | Clear ............. | — | 1 |
| — | 15 | S.W. | Clear ............. | — | 1 |
| — | 16 | S.W. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 17 | W. | Clear ............. | — | 1 |
| — | 18 | W. | Foggy ............. | 1 | — |
| — | 19 | S.W. | Clear ............. | — | 1 |
| — | 20 | S.W. | Some rain .......... | 1 | — |
| — | 21 | E. | Mist and rain ........ | 1 | — |
| — | 22 | E. | Clear................ | — | 1 |
| — | 23 | W. | Clear...... ....... | — | 1 |
| — | 24 | S.W. | Clear................ | — | 1 |
| — | 25 | S.W. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |
| — | 26 | E. | Rain ................ | 1 | — |

| Month and Year. | | Winds. | State of the Weather. | Wet Days. | Dry Days. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| April | 27 | N. | Mist and rain | 1 | — |
| — | 28 | N. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 29 | E. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 30 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| May | 1 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 2 | S.E. | Cloudy | 1 | — |
| — | 3 | S.E. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — | 4 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 5 | W. | Heavy fog | 1 | — |
| — | 6 | N. | Mist and rain | 1 | — |
| — | 7 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 8 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 9 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 10 | E. | Foggy and rain | 1 | — |
| — | 11 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 12 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 13 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 14 | N. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — | 15 | N.W. | Clear and warm | — | 1 |
| — | 16 | S.W. | Clear and dry | — | 1 |
| — | 17 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 18 | S.W. | Fog and rain | 1 | — |
| — | 19 | W. | Heavy mist | 1 | — |
| — | 20 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 21 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 22 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 23 | N.E. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — | 24 | N.E. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 25 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 26 | S.W. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — | 27 | S.W. | Foggy and clear | — | 1 |
| — | 28 | E. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — | 29 | N. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — | 30 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 31 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| June | 1 | W. | Clear and dry | — | 1 |
| — | 2 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 3 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 4 | S.W. | Clear, S. wind | — | 1 |
| — | 5 | E. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 6 | N. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — | 7 | S.W. | Foggy | 1 | — |
| — | 8 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 9 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 10 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — | 11 | S.W. | Mist | 1 | — |

| Month and Year. | Winds. | State of the Weather. | Wet Days. | Dry Days. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| June 12 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — 13 | N.W. | Foggy | 1 | — |
| — 14 | N. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — 15 | E. | Rainy | 1 | — |
| — 16 | N.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — 17 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — 18 | W. | Very sultry | 1 | — |
| — 19 | S.W. | Strong heat | — | 1 |
| — 20 | S.W. | Sultry | — | 1 |
| — 21 | S.W. | Sultry | — | 1 |
| — 22 | S.W. | Dull weather | — | 1 |
| — 23 | W. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — 24 | N.W. | Rain | 1 | — |
| — 25 | W. | Cloudy | — | 1 |
| — 26 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — 27 | S.W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — 28 | W. | Clear | — | 1 |
| — 29 | N.E. | Very sultry | — | 1 |
| — 30 | E. | Cloudy | — | 1 |
| July 1 | S.W. | Clear and dry | — | 1 |
| — 2 | S.W. | Thermometer stood 93° | — | 3 |
| — 3 | | | | |
| — 4 | | | | |
| — 5 | W. | Windy and rain | 1 | — |
| — 6 | S.W. | Clear and warm | — | 4 |
| — 7 | | | | |
| — 8 | | | | |
| — 9 | | | | |
| — 10 | W. | Sultry, thermometer 92° | — | 2 |
| — 11 | | | | |
| — 12 | S.W. | Sultry and calm | — | 3 |
| — 13 | | | | |
| — 14 | | | | |
| — 15 | W. | Cloudy and rain | 1 | — |
| — 16 | N. | Cloudy, some rain | 1 | — |
| — 17 | W. | Clear and dry | — | 4 |
| — 18 | | | | |
| — 19 | | | | |
| — 20 | | | | |
| — 21 | S.W. | Thermometer ab. Zero 95 | — | 2 |
| — 22 | | | | |

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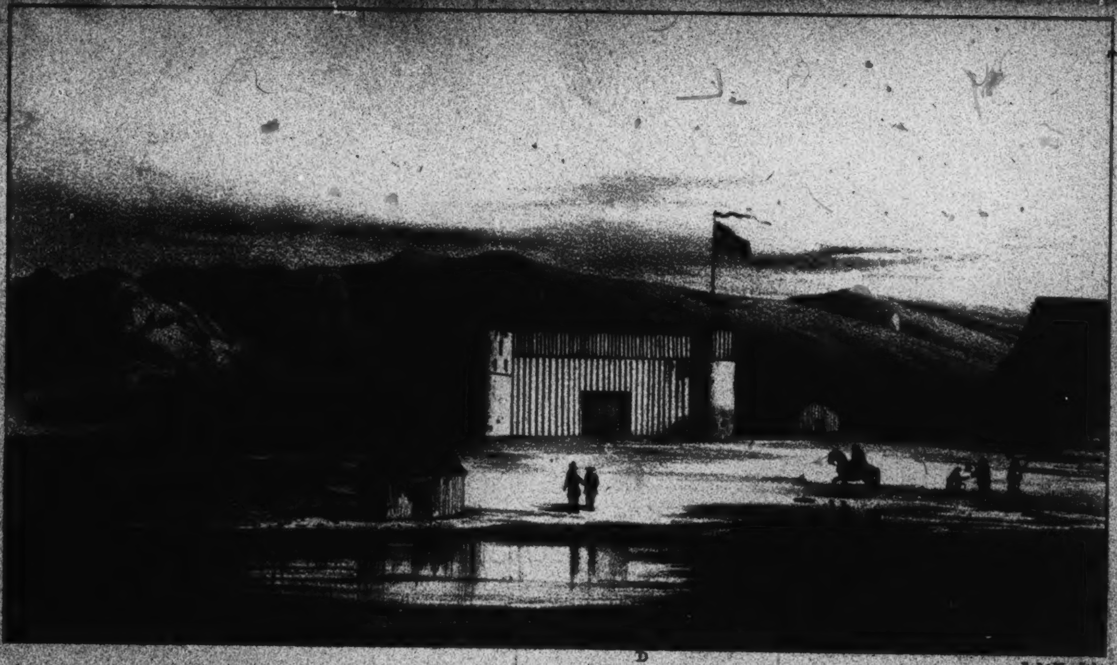

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WOODFALL AND KINDER,
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# DEDICATION.

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## TO SIR GEORGE SIMPSON,

GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF OF PRINCE RUPERT'S LAND.

IN completing the narrative of my adventures, to whom can I so appropriately inscribe this portion of my work as to yourself—under whose auspices I acted during the last four years of my career, under whose command my closing journey was performed, whose kindness and courtesy I have experienced for many years, and to whose liberality I am indebted for a resting-place in this the land of my adoption.

When, upwards of thirty years ago, the Imperial Parliament sanctioned a coalition of the rival companies of the North-West and Hudson's Bay, requiring at the same time that the natives should be evangelised and civilised, it was under your auspices that the former arduous undertaking was accomplished, and the latter praiseworthy good work commenced.

3895

And now the Red River Academy, sending its light into the wilderness, and already furnishing students to the Universities of England, Scotland, and Canada, is the monument of your zeal for the education of our youth. The churches of every denomination of Christians throughout the Continent bear witness to your desire for the promotion of religious instruction, as well as the civilisation of the native Indians.

And lastly—not to omit material interests—two hundred importers from England, with capital almost exclusively of colonial creation, evidence the rewards of agriculture, industry, and commercial enterprise under your fostering care.

May it please you to accept the dedication of my work,

And believe me to be, SIR,
With sincere respect,
Your most obliged and faithful servant,
ALEXANDER ROSS.

# PREFACE.

The Author of the following sheets has spent the last forty-four years of his life, without a single day's intermission, in the Indian territories of North America; the first fifteen years in the regions of Columbia, that farthest of the "far west;" the remaining years in the Red River Settlement, a spot more effectually cut off from the rest of the world than any other colony of the empire. Under these circumstances, if he has earned the doubtful advantage of enacting a tale of his own, he has enjoyed but scanty opportunities of adorning it.

In 1849, the Author published a narrative of his adventures, ending with the overthrow of the Pacific Fur Company;* and the favourable reception of hi labours induces him again to appear before the public with an account of his services in the great companies of his own country. His aim has been to exhibit realities: to relate facts as they have occurred; to impart to others at their quiet firesides the interest of a wild and adventurous life, without its toils, privations, and dangers; and to adhere always to the simple truth. As, then, these volumes range over a wider expanse of Indian territory than the former, so do they introduce new features of Indian life and manners. Regions unvisited, and now only partially explored, are pourtrayed as they appeared to the first civilised intruder in the wilderness. And the Author has endeavoured to give a description of the trapper's as well as the trader's life among the Indians; both being replete with adventures: for while the trader has an advantage in that he has something to give or to exchange, the very tools of the trapper's craft produce his trouble; the steel of his traps is precious metal to the Indian savage, with whom to plunder a white man is a virtue.

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* "Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River," by Alexander Ross.

Neither in this, nor in the preceding volume, has the Author been content with a bare narration of his own personal adventures. He has not omitted to record any facts that came to his knowledge respecting the geography of the countries and the history of the settlements; and from the rapidity with which events follow each other in new countries, these memorials will soon become materials for a History of the Oregon.

The Pacific Fur Company, the earliest pioneer of civilisation on the Columbia, surrendered to a British rival the fruits of three years' vigorous labour. The North-West Company, its rival, whose commercial greatness was only equalled by its political importance, has passed away; after wielding for eight years a sovereignty from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.

The Hudson's Bay Company, after ruling under higher authority, and for many more years than its rivals and predecessors, is now the taxed subject of a republic, which has arisen, as it were, from the ashes of the first of the three invaders of primeval barbarism.

Under so many successive changes, the aboriginal tribes, once so formidable, are fast melting away; the fur trade, the incentive to such great enterprises and brave deeds, has almost perished, and the plough is fast following the axe. Churches are already rising among villages, schools are multiplying, the hymn of peace has taken the place of the wild song of the savage; and soon all traces of the past will be in the memorials which the pen has preserved.

In committing his work to the press, the Author would say in conclusion, what he has written is fact and not fiction: real wild life, not romance.

*Red River Settlement, Rupert's Land,*
*June 1st*, 1854.

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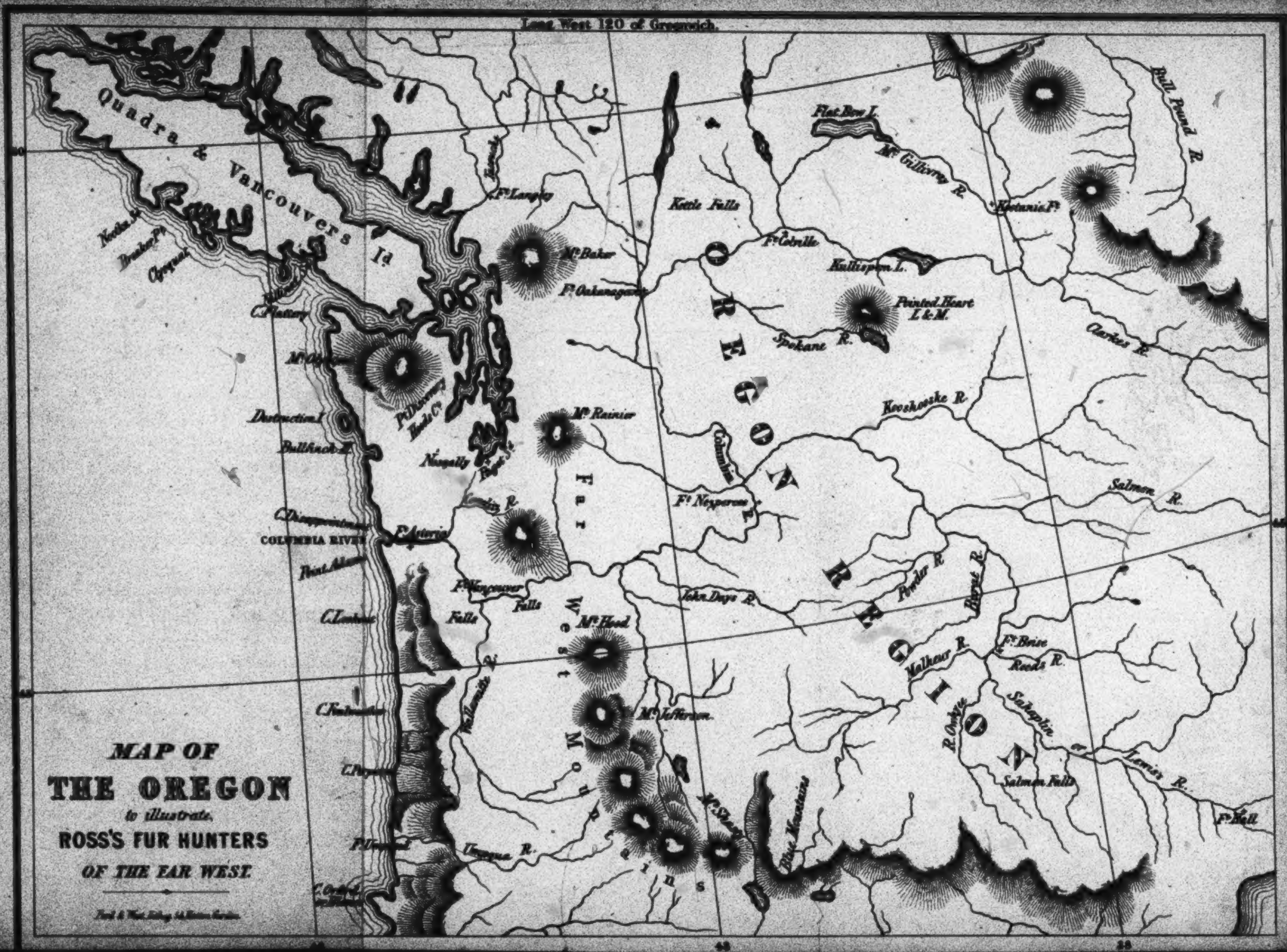
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Wallamitte R.
Fraser R.
Ft Langley
Mt Baker
Ft Oakanagan
Mt Rainier
Far West Mountains
Mt Hood
Mt Jefferson
Mt Shasty
Blue Mountains
Kettle Falls
Ft Colville
Columbia
Ft Nezperces
OREGON REGION
Flat Bow L.
Mc Gillivray R.
Kootanie Ft
Bull Pound R.
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MAP OF
THE OREGON
to illustrate,
ROSS'S FUR HUNTERS
OF THE FAR WEST.

Ford & West, Lithog. 54 Hatton Garden.

# THE
# FUR HUNTERS OF THE FAR WEST.

## INTRODUCTION.

In a work published by the writer a few years ago,* he traced the history of the Pacific Fur Company, the first commercial association established on the waters of the Oregon or Columbia River, through all the windings of its short-lived existence: an association which promised so much, and accomplished so little; the boldness of the undertaking, and the unyielding energy displayed in the execution, rendered it deserving a better fate. But the vicissitudes of fortune, and an unbroken chain of adverse circumstances, from its commencement in 1810, continued, till its premature downfall paved the way for a more successful rival in 1813, when the great Astor project, which had for its object the monopolisation of all the fur trade on the Continent, yielded to the North-West Company.

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* Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River, by Alexander Ross.

In the present work, we propose taking up the subject of Oregon and the Rocky Mountains, beginning with Astor's rival, the North-West Company, from the time that it occupied the entire trade of the Oregon, till its final overthrow by another rival, the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1821.

This wide field of commercial enterprise fell into the lap of the North-West Company almost without an effort; for misfortunes alone, over which man had no control, sealed the doom of unfortunate Astoria. The first ship, called the *Tonquin*, employed by the Astor Company, was cut off by the Indians on the north-west coast, and every soul on board massacred. The second, named the *Beaver*, was lost in unknown seas; and the third, called the *Lark*, was upset in a gale 250 miles from the Sandwich Islands, and became a total wreck; and to complete the catalogue of disasters, in 1812 war broke out between England and the United States.

Let us take a passing glance at the negotiations between the late Pacific Fur Company and the North-West Company, which were as follows:—The whole of the goods belonging to the former were delivered over to the latter at 10 per cent. on cost and charges. The furs on hand were valued at so much per skin. Thus, the whole sales amounted to 80,500 dollars, and bills of exchange, negotiable in Canada, were accepted in payment thereof; at the same time, the name of Astoria, the great depôt of the Astor Company, situated at the mouth of the Columbia, was changed to Fort George.

The above transactions, which changed the aspect of affairs on the Oregon, took place on the 16th of October, 1813.

The earliest notice of any adventurer traversing these regions is that of Mr. Samuel Hearne, an officer in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, during the years 1769 and 1772. In his third and last expedition, he started from Fort Prince of Wales, in 1770, and reached the mouth of the Copper Mine River on the 17th of July in the following year. The ice was then just beginning to break up round the shores of the Frozen Ocean. We need scarcely mention, that Mr. Hearne was here, far within the arctic circle, where the sun never sets at that season of the year. The next instance we have on record is that of Sir Alexander M'Kenzie, a partner of the North-West Company, who, in the year 1789, performed his first expedition of discovery across the Continent, from Montreal to the Hyperborean Sea, and again in 1793 to the Pacific Ocean. This enterprising adventurer did much to develope the inland resources of the country, and was personally known to the writer.

In the early part of the present century, Fraser and Stuart, also two partners of the North-West Company, crossed the Continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, still further south than their predecessors. One of the great streams of the far west still bears the name of "Fraser's River," as a tribute to the memory of the first discoverer. A somewhat curious anecdote is told of this expedition. On reaching the Pacific, the Indians put on a bold and threatening aspect. The party had a small field-piece with them; and to relieve the anxiety of the moment, by frightening the savages, the piece was loaded and fired off into the middle of the crowd; but it is hard to say which party were most frightened by the discharge, for the gun burst and was blown to atoms! Yet, strange as it may appear, no person was either killed or wounded by the accident. The momentary surprise, however, gave time to the party to shift their quarters, and make good their retreat.

Indeed, to the spirit of enterprise diffused among the fur traders, from the earliest days of the French down to the present time, we owe almost all that we know of these savage wilds; yet, with all their zeal and enterprise in the pursuit of game, they were always tardy in giving what they did know to the world; not so much from selfish motives to conceal the truth, as from the difficulty, in many instances, of getting that truth made public.

So far, then, the north has been more favoured than the far west, for no white man had as yet visited the Columbia to any extent: if we except Vancouver's survey of its entrance, in 1792, and the transitory visit of Lewis and Clarke in 1805, the writer himself and his associates were the first explorers of that distant quarter.

The North-West Company, originally incorporated in the year 1787, had by their accession of territory an unlimited range from the Atlantic to the Pacific: they ruled from sea to sea; and as it became necessary to occupy the stations received from the Astor Company, they offered engagements to some of the partners, but not upon the same advantageous terms as they granted to their own people on the east side of the mountains; nor did they hold out the same prospects of promotion to those who joined them on the west, and especially to those branded with the epithet "Yankee." Being, however, disappointed by the failure of the Astor concern, I refused to enter the service of the North-West Company on any other condition than that which included promotion, and as I was the only one that acted on this principle, they met my views and we came to terms; so I became a north-wester. My promotion was guaranteed to take place in 1822, by a written document signed at head quarters; while, in the meantime, I was appointed to the northern district, which, being a titled charge, was, of itself, a step towards preferment. But here we must explain what is meant by a "titled charge," according to north-west nomenclature; clerks have charge of posts, bourgeois of districts, and the ambition of the clerk is naturally to become a bourgeois.

The first step the north-westers took, after inheriting their new acquisition, was to dispatch two of their partners, and twenty of their men, in two boats, to convey the gratifying news to Fort William, the chief depôt of their inland trade on Lake Superior. Everything was done to dissuade Messrs. Keith and Alexander Stuart from undertaking so perilous an adventure with so few men; but to no purpose. They made light of the matter, giving us to understand that they were north-westers! "We are strong enough," said they, "to go through any part of the country." Full of confidence in themselves, they derided the danger, as they did our counsel.

The journey began, and all went on well enough till they arrived at the portage of the Cascades; the first impediment was in ascending the river, distant 180 miles from Fort George. Here the Indians collected in great numbers, as usual, but did not attempt anything until the people had got involved and dispersed in the portage; they then seized the opportunity, drew their bows, brandished their lances, and pounced upon the gun-cases, powder-kegs, and bales of goods, at the place where Mr. Stuart was stationed. He tried to defend his post, but owing to the wet weather his gun missed fire several times, and before any assistance could reach him, he had received three arrows; his gun had just fallen from his hand as a half-bred, named Finlay, came up and shot his assailant dead. By this time the people concentrated, and the Indians fled to their strongholds behind the rocks and trees. To save the property in this moment of alarm and confusion was impossible; to save themselves, and carry off Mr. Stuart, was the first consideration; they therefore made for their canoes with all haste, and embarked. Here it was found that one man was missing, and Mr. Keith, who was still on shore, urged the party strongly to wait a little; but the people in the canoes called on Mr. Keith, in a tone of despair, to jump into the canoe, or else they would push off and leave him also; being a resolute man, and not easily intimidated, he immediately cocked his gun, and threatened to shoot the first man that moved. Mr. Stuart, who was faint from loss of blood, seeing Mr. Keith determined, and the men alarmed, beckoned to Mr. Keith to embark. The moment he jumped into the canoe, they pushed off and shot down the current. During this time Mr. Stuart suffered severely, and was very low, as his wounds could not then be examined; when this was done, they discovered that the barbs of the arrows were of iron, and one of them had struck on a stone pipe which he carried in his waistcoat pocket, to which fortunate circumstance he perhaps owed his life.

The chief object of this expedition has been noticed; but there was another which we shall just mention. A party of six men, under a Mr. Reid, had been fitted out by the Astor Company for the Snake country the year before, of which hitherto there had been no tidings: a part of the present expedition was to have gone in search of them;

the unfortunate affair at the Cascades, however, put an end to the matter, and taught the north-westers that the lads of the Cascades did not respect their feathers. Thus terminated the first adventure of the North-West Company on the Columbia. It was afterwards discovered that Mr. Reid and his party were all murdered by the Indians.

This disaster set the whole north-west machinery at Fort George in motion. Revenge for the insult, and a heavy retribution on the heads of the whole Cath-le-yách-ó-yach nation was decreed in a full council; and for a whole week nothing was to be heard about the place but the clang of arms and the din of war. Every man worth naming was armed, and besides the ordinary arms and accoutrements, two great guns, six swivels, cutlasses, hand-grenades, and handcuffs, with ten days' provisions, were embarked; in short, all the weapons and missiles that could be brought into action were collected and put in train for destroying the Indians of the Cascades, root and branch.

Eighty-five picked men, and two Chinook interpreters, under six chosen leaders, were enrolled in the expedition. The command of it was tendered to Mr. M'Kenzie, who, however, very prudently declined; merely observing that, as he was on the eve of leaving the country, he did not wish to mix himself up with north-west affairs, but that he would cheerfully go as a volunteer. The command then devolved on Mr. M'Tavish, and on the 20th of January, with buoyant hearts and flags flying, a fleet of ten sail conveyed the men to the field of action. On the third day they arrived safely, and cast anchor at Strawberry Island, near the foot of the rapids. On their way up, the name of this formidable armament struck such terror into the marauders along the river, that they fled to the fastnesses and hiding-places of the wilderness; even the two Chinook interpreters could neither sleep nor eat, so grieved were they at the thoughts of the bloody scenes that were soon to be enacted.

On the next morning, after the expedition came to anchor, the Indians were summoned to appear and give an account of their late conduct, and were required, if they wished for mercy, to deliver up at once all the property plundered from the expedition of Messrs. Keith and Stuart. The Cath-le-yach-é-yach chiefs, not the least intimidated by the hostile array before them, sent back an answer,—"The whites have killed two of our people, let them deliver up the murderers to us, and we will deliver to them all the property in our possession." After returning this answer, the Indians sent off all their wives and children into the thick woods; then arming themselves, they took their stand behind the trees and rocks. M'Tavish then sent the interpreters to invite them to a parley, and to smoke the pipe of peace. The Indians returned for answer, that "When the whites had paid according to Indian law for the two men they had killed, they would smoke the pipe of peace, but not till then. Their wives and children were safe, and as for themselves they were prepared for the worst." Thus little progress was made during the first day.

The next day the interpreters were sent to sound them again. Towards noon a few stragglers and slaves approached the camp and delivered up a small parcel of cloth and cotton, torn into pieces and scarcely worth picking up, with a message from the chiefs:—"We have sent you some of the property; deliver us up the murderers, and we will send the rest." Some were for hanging up the Indians at once; others for detaining them. At length it was resolved to let them go. In the evening, two of the principal chiefs surrendered themselves to M'Tavish, bringing also a small parcel of odds-and-ends, little better than the last. Being interrogated as to the stolen property, they denied being present at the time, and had cunning enough to make their innocence appear, and also to convince M'Tavish that they were using their utmost influence to bring the Indians to terms, and deliver up the property. A council was then held to decide on the fate of the prisoners. Some were, as in the former case, for hanging them up; others for taking them down to Fort George in irons. The council was divided, and at last it was resolved to treat the prisoners liberally and let them go: they never returned again; and thus ended the negotiations of the second day.

The third day the interpreters were at work again; but instead of making any favourable impression on the Indians, they were told, that if they returned again without delivering up the murderers, they would be fired upon. During this day, the Indians came once or twice out to the edge of the woods. Some were for firing the great guns where they were seen in the largest numbers; others, more ardent, but less calculating, were for storming their haunts, and bringing the matter to a speedy issue. Every movement of the whites was seen by the Indians, but not a movement of the Indians could be discerned by the whites; and the day passed away without any result. Next morning, it was discovered that some of the Indians, lurking about, had entered the camp, and carried off two guns, a kettle, and one of the men's bonnets; the Indians were seen occasionally flying from place to place, now and then whooping and yelling, as if some plan of attack were in contemplation. This was a new symptom, and convinced the whites that they were getting more bold and daring in proportion as their opponents were passive and undecided. These circumstances made the whites reflect on their own position. The savages, sheltered behind the trees and rocks, might cut them all off without being seen; and it was intimated by the interpreters that the Indians might all this time be increasing their numbers by foreign auxiliaries. Whether true or false, the suggestion had its effect in determining the whites that they stood upon dangerous ground, and that the sooner they left it the better. They therefore, without recovering the property, firing a gun, or securing a single prisoner, sounded a retreat, and returned home on the ninth day, having made matters ten times worse than they were before.

This warlike expedition was turned into ridicule by the Cath-le-yach-é-yachs, and had a very bad effect on the Indians generally. On their way back, some were so ashamed that they turned off towards the Wallamitte to hide their disgrace, others remained for some days at the Cowlitz, and M'Tavish himself reached Fort George in the night; and thus ended this inglorious expedition.

It ought to be observed, that the nature of the ground along the Cascades, on both sides of the river, is such as to afford no position secure from attack or surprise; and it showed a manifest want of judgment in an Indian trader to expose his people in such a dangerous situation, where the Indians might have way-laid and cut them off to a man, and that without quitting their fastnesses; whereas the whole difficulty might have been easily obviated by a very simple stratagem on the part of the whites, who might have quietly secured three or four of the principal men as hostages, which would have soon settled the whole affair, without noise or any warlike demonstration.

The north-westers were prone to find fault with the acts of their predecessors; yet, with all this fault-finding, they had not laid down any system or plan to guide their future operations, either with respect to the coast or inland trade: this appeared inexplicable to us, and we waited in anxious expectation to see what time would bring forth.

One day, as I was musing over affairs, Mr. M'Donald, called the "Bras-croche," the gentleman in charge of the Columbia, called me into his room, and after some trivial observations, said, "Well, I suppose you have heard that I intend to leave the country this spring?" "No," replied I, "I have heard nothing of it." "But," resumed he, "you will have heard that the spring brigade is to leave in a few days for the interior." "Oh, yes," said I, "I have heard of that." "Yes," continued he, "we intend to start in a few days, and I shall leave the country. I could have wished to have some settled plan for carrying on the Columbia trade; but there are so many conflicting opinions on that subject, that we have not been able to come to any decision; so that I fear the trade must go on the best way that it can, for this year yet." "Then," said I, "you do not approve of the system we have been following (meaning the Americans'): it appeared to me to work very well." He shook his head and smiled, but said nothing. Then suddenly turning to the subject of the voyage, he said, "Will there be any danger in getting along? our party will be strong." Mr. M'Donald, having come out by sea, had never ascended or descended the waters of the Columbia.

"A strong party, with the usual precautions," said I, "will carry you through with safety: compared with former years the voyage is mere holiday-work." At the words "usual precautions," he smiled. "Do you think," he asked, "that north-westers do not know, as well as the Americans, how to travel among Indians?" "The north-westers," observed I, "know how to travel among the Indians of Athabasca and the north; but the Americans know better than north-westers how to travel among the Indians of Columbia." Continuing the subject, he remarked, "The Indians along the communication must be taught to respect the whites: the rascals have not been well broken in. You will soon see a specimen of our mode of travelling among Indians, and what effect it will produce." "Well, I shall be glad to see it," said I; "but I hope it will not be such a specimen as was exhibited at the Cascades, nor produce the same results." On my mentioning the word "Cascades," his cheeks reddened, and he appeared somewhat nettled; but, recollecting himself, he changed the subject, and put the question, "Where are the worst Indians along the route?" To this I replied, that the worst Indians are those at the Dalles, called Wy-ampams or gamblers, some sixty miles beyond the Cascades; but with a strong party and good night-watch there would be nothing to fear. He next inquired, how far the Americans had penetrated to the north. "To the island of Sitka," was my reply.

"And how far to the south?" inquired he again. "To the frontiers of California," I answered. He then asked if we had been as far east as the Rocky Mountains. To which I answered, that we had, and crossed them too. "The Americans," he remarked, "have been very enterprising." "We are called Americans," said I, "but there were very few Americans among us—we were all Scotchmen like yourselves: I do not mean that we were the more enterprising for that."

On the subject of travelling, he next inquired if we invariably used horses. I told him that no horses were used along the coast, that the natives kept none, nor would the thick forests admit of their being used; but that throughout the interior all journeys were performed on horseback. "You must," continued he, "have travelled over a great part of the country?" "Yes, we did," I replied; "it has often been remarked, that before we were a year on the Columbia, we had travelled, in various directions, more than ten thousand miles." "That is a reproach to us," said he, "for we have been here upwards of six months, and, with but one exception, have scarcely been six miles from our fort gates." He then asked me, what I thought of the manner in which the Americans carried on the trade with the Indians. "I always admired it," answered I; "they treated them kindly, traded honestly, and never introduced spirituous liquors among them." "Ha!" he exclaimed: "but was it not a losing business?" I admitted that it was; and added, Astor's under-hand policy, and the war breaking out at the time it did, ruined all. But, I remarked, "The country is rich in valuable furs, and the north-west will now inherit those riches." "Time will tell," was his only answer. After alluding briefly to our trials, hardships, and experience on the Columbia, "Well," said he, "I suppose we shall have to do the best we can, as you did, for this year at least, and follow the system pursued by the Americans." He then requested me to make out an estimate of men and goods, for the different posts of the interior.

# CHAPTER I.

**The first grand movement—The voyage—Usual precautions neglected—A man shot—Oakanagan—Parting of friends—Horse trading adventure—Troubles and trials—The knife: Life or death—A night-scene with Eyacktana—Beads, buttons, and rings—The restive horse—Scene at parting—Adventure of the two women—Grand Coulé, the wonder of the Oregon—Scenes at Fort George—Two Indians shot—Commotion among the natives—The 'Isaac Todd'—Sunshine and cloud—Seven men drowned—The sagacious squaw—Miraculous escape—John Little's narrative—Remarks—China trade—My project of discovery—The Indian and the compass—Disappointments—Too much confidence in Indians—Smoking banquet—Arrive at Fort George.**

ON the sixth day after my conversation with Mr. M'Donald, the brigade took its departure for the interior. It was the first grand movement of the North-West Company on the Columbia. On this occasion, one hundred and twenty-four men started, exclusive of the people of the late Astor Company, who were on their way to Canada by land. The whole embarked in a squadron of fourteen boats. The papers, bills, and other documents belonging to the American adventurers, were put in the possession of our respected friend, Donald M'Kenzie, Esq., in order to be delivered to Mr. Astor at New York, and along with the party was the Company's express for head quarters. The whole left Fort George under a salute, with flags flying.

On passing the Cascades the friendly Cath-le-yach-é-yachs did not so much as come and shake hands with us, nor welcome our arrival, but kept at a distance; so we passed without the least interruption, and all went on smoothly till we reached the Dalles, that noted haunt of Indian pillagers. There we had to put up and encamp for the night; but the usual camp regulations were neglected: no importance whatever was attached to the two little words, "usual precautions," which I had so emphatically mentioned to Mr. M'Donald; such things were now looked upon as a useless relic of "Yankeeism," therefore no night-watch was set, and all hands went to sleep. It was not long before a voice called out, "To arms, to arms! the camp is surrounded!" In the turmoil and confusion that ensued, every one firing off his gun at random as he got up, one of our own men, a creole of the south, was shot dead: and his life purchased us a lesson against another time. If any Indians were actually about our camp, they must have scampered off instantly and unperceived; which they could easily have done, for none were to be seen when the confusion was over, nor was it ever known who gave the fatal alarm.

From Creole campment we reached the Forks, 160 miles beyond the Dalles. This is another great rendezvous for Indians, but we passed it quietly without interruption. Thence we proceeded on to Fort Oakanagan, 200 miles above the Forks, without accident or hindrance; always careful, however, to remember the "usual precautions," by setting a night-watch. On arriving at this place, the different parties separated for their respective wintering grounds; and here the Fort William express, and our friends for Canada, bade us adieu, and continued their journey. We shall now leave the affairs of the voyage, and take up the subject of horses and inland transportation.

On reaching Oakanagan everything was at a dead stand for want of pack-horses to transport the goods inland, and as no horses were to be got nearer than the Eyakema Valley, some 200 miles south-west, it was resolved to proceed thither in quest of a supply: at that place all the Indians were rich in horses. The Cayouses, the Nez-Percés, and other warlike tribes, assemble every spring in the Eyakemas to lay in a stock of the favourite Kamass and Pelua, or sweet potatoes, held in high estimation as articles of food among the natives. There also the Indians hold their councils, and settle the affairs of peace or war for the year; it is, therefore, the great national rendezvous, where thousands meet, and on such occasions, horses can be got in almost any number; but, owing to the vast concourse of mixed tribes, there is always more or less risk attending the undertaking.

To this place I had been once before during the days of the Pacific Fur Company, so it fell to my lot again, although it was well known that the fatal disasters which more than once took place between those tribes and the whites would not have diminished, but rather increased, the danger; yet there was no alternative, I must go: so I set off with a small bundle of trading articles, and only three men, Mr. Thomas M'Kay, a young clerk, and two French Canadians, and as no more men could be spared, the two latter took their wives along with them, to aid in driving the horses, for women in these parts are as expert as men on horseback.

On the fourth night after leaving Oakanagan, Sopa, a friendly neighbouring chief of the Pisscows tribe, on learning that we were on our way to the Eyakemas, despatched two of his men to warn us of our danger, and bring us back. The zealous couriers reached our camp late in the night. My men were fast asleep; but there was no sleep for me: I was too anxious, and heard their approach. I watched their motions for some time with my gun in my hand, till they called out in their own language, "Samah! Samah! Pedcousm, pedcousm" —White men, white men, turn back, turn back, you are all dead men! It was, however, of no use, for we must go at all hazard. I had risked my life there for the Americans, I could not now do less for the North-West Company: so with deep regret the friendly couriers left us and returned, and with no less reluctance we proceeded. The second day after our friends left us, we entered the Eyakema Valley—"The beautiful Eyakema Valley"—so called by the whites. But, on the present occasion, there was nothing either beautiful or interesting to us; for we had scarcely advanced three miles when a camp in the true Mameluke style presented itself; a camp, of which we could see the beginning but not the end! It could not have contained less than 3000 men, exclusive of women and children, and treble that number of horses. It was a grand and imposing sight in the wilderness, covering more than six miles in every direction. Councils, root-gathering, hunting, horse-racing, foot-racing, gambling, singing, dancing, drumming, yelling, and a thousand other things, which I cannot mention, were going on around us.

The din of men, the noise of women, the screaming of children, the tramping of horses, and howling of dogs, was more than can well be described. Let the reader picture to himself a great city in an uproar—it will afford some idea of our position. In an Indian camp you see life without disguise; the feelings, the passions, the propensities, as they ebb and flow in the savage breast. In this field of savage glory all was motion and commotion; we advanced through groups of men and bands of horses, till we reached the very centre of the camp, and there the sight of the chiefs' tents admonished us to dismount and pay them our respects, as we depended on them for our protection.

Our reception was cool, the chiefs were hostile and sullen, they saluted us in no very flattering accents. "These are the men," said they, "who kill our relations, the people who have caused us to mourn." And here, for the first time, I regretted we had not taken advice in time, and returned with the couriers; for the general aspect of things was against us. It was evident we stood on slippery ground: we felt our weakness. In all sudden and unexpected rencontres with hostile Indians, the first impulse is generally a tremor or sensation of fear, but that soon wears off; it was so with myself at this moment, for after a short interval I nerved myself to encounter the worst.

The moment we dismounted, we were surrounded, and the savages, giving two or three war-whoops and yells, drove the animals we had ridden out of our sight; this of itself was a hostile movement. We had to judge from appearances, and be guided by circumstances. My first care was to try and direct their attention to something new, and to get rid of the temptation there was to dispose of my goods; so without a moment's delay, I commenced a trade in horses; but every horse I bought during that and the following day, as well as those we had brought with us, were instantly driven out of sight, in the midst of yelling and jeering: nevertheless, I continued to trade while an article remained, putting the best face on things I could, and taking no notice of their conduct, as no insult or violence had as yet been offered to ourselves personally. Two days and nights had now elapsed since our arrival, without food or sleep; the Indians refused us the former, our own anxiety deprived us of the latter.

During the third day I discovered that the two women were to have been either killed or taken from us and made slaves. So surrounded were we for miles on every side, that we could not stir unobserved; yet we had to devise some means for their escape, and to get them clear of the camp was a task of no ordinary difficulty and danger. In this critical conjuncture, however, something had to be done, and that without delay. One of them had a child at the breast, which increased the difficulty. To attempt sending them back by the road they came, would have been sacrificing them. To attempt an unknown path through the rugged mountains, however doubtful the issue, appeared the only prospect that held out a glimpse of hope; therefore, to this mode of escape I directed their attention. As soon as it was dark, they set out on their forlorn adventure, without food, guide, or protection, to make their way home, under a kind Providence!

"You are to proceed," said I to them, "due north, cross the mountains, and keep in that direction till you fall on the Pisscows River; take the first canoe you find, and proceed with all diligence down to the mouth of it, and there await our arrival. But if we are not there on the fourth day, you may proceed to Oakanagan, and tell your story." With these instructions we parted; and with but little hopes of our ever meeting again. I had no sooner set about getting the women off, than the husbands expressed a wish to accompany them; the desire was natural, yet I had to oppose it. This state of things distracted my attention: my eyes had now to be on my own people as well as on the Indians, as I was apprehensive they would desert. "There is no hope for the women by going alone," said the husbands, "no hope for us by remaining here: we might as well be killed in the attempt to escape, as remain to be killed here." "No," said I, "by remaining here we do our duty; by going, we should be deserting our duty." To this remonstrance they made no reply. The Indians soon perceived that they had been outwitted. They turned over our baggage, and searched in every hole and corner. Disappointment creates ill-humour: it was so with the Indians. They took the men's guns out of their hands, fired them off at their feet, and then, with savage laughter, laid them down again; took their hats off their heads, and after strutting about with these for some time, jeeringly gave them back to their owners: all this time they never interfered with me, but I felt that every insult offered to my men was an indirect insult offered to myself.

The day after the women went off, I ordered one of the men to try and cook something for us; for hitherto we had eaten nothing since our arrival, except a few raw roots which we managed to get unobserved. But the kettle was no sooner on the fire than five or six spears bore off, in savage triumph, the contents: they even emptied out the water, and threw the kettle on one side; and this was no sooner done than thirty or forty ill-favoured wretches fired a volley in the embers before us, which caused a cloud of smoke and ashes to ascend, darkening the air around us: a strong hint not to put the kettle any more on the fire, and we took it.

At this time the man who had put the kettle on the fire took the knife with which he had cut the venison to lay it by, when one of the Indians, called Eyacktana, a bold and turbulent chief, snatched it out of his hand; the man, in an angry tone, demanded his knife, saying to me, "I 'll have my knife from the villain, life or death." "No," said I. The chief, seeing the man angry, threw down his robe, and grasping the knife in his fist, with the point downwards, raised his arm, making a motion in advance as if he intended using it. The crisis had now arrived! At this moment there was a dead silence. The Indians were flocking in from all quarters: a dense crowd surrounded us. Not a moment was to be lost; delay would be fatal, and nothing now seemed to remain for us but to sell our lives as dearly as pos sible. With this impression, grasping a pistol, I advanced a step towards the villain who held the knife, with the full determination of putting an end to his career before any of us should fall; but while in the act of lifting my foot and moving my arm, a second idea flashed across my mind, admonishing me to soothe, and not provoke, the Indians, that Providence might yet make a way for us to escape: this thought saved the Indian's life, and ours too. Instead of drawing the pistol, as I intended, I took a knife from my belt, such as travellers generally use in this country, and presented it to him, saying, "Here, my friend, is a chief's knife, I give it to you; that is not a chief's knife, give it back to the man." Fortunately, he took mine in his hand; but, still sullen and savage, he said nothing. The moment was a critical one; our fate hung as by a thread: I shall never forget it! All the bystanders had their eyes now fixed on the chief, thoughtful and silent as he stood; we also stood motionless, not knowing what a moment might bring forth. At last the savage handed the man his knife, and turning mine round and round for some time in his hands, turned to his people, holding up the knife in his hand, exclaimed, "Sheaugh Me-yokat Waltz"—Look, my friends, at the chief's knife: these words he repeated over and over again. He was delighted. The Indians flocked round him: all admired the toy, and in the excess of his joy he harangued the multitude in our favour. Fickle, indeed, are savages! They were now no longer enemies, but friends! Several others, following Eyacktana's example, harangued in turn, all in favour of the whites. This done, the great men squatted themselves down, the pipe of peace was called for, and while it was going round and round the smoking circle, I gave each of the six principal chiefs a small paper-cased looking-glass and a little vermilion, as a present; and in return, they presented me with two horses and twelve beavers, while the women soon brought us a variety of eatables.

This sudden change regulated my movements. Indeed, I might say the battle was won. I now made a speech to them in turn, and, as many of them understood the language I spoke, I asked them what I should say to the great white chief when I got home, when he asks me where are all the horses I bought from you. What shall I say to him? At this question it was easy to see that their pride was touched. "Tell him," said Eyacktana, "that we have but one mouth, and one word; all the horses you have bought from us are yours; they shall be delivered up." This was just what I wanted. After a little counselling among themselves, Eyacktana was the first to speak, and he undertook to see them collected.

By this time it was sun-down. The chief then mounted his horse, and desired me to mount mine and accompany him, telling one of his sons to take my men and property under his charge till our return. Being acquainted with Indian habits, I knew there would be repeated calls upon my purse, so I put some trinkets into my pocket, and we started on our nocturnal adventure; which I considered hazardous, but not hopeless.

Such a night we had! The chief harangued, travelled and harangued, the whole night; the people replied. We visited every street, alley, hole and corner of the camp, which we traversed lengthway, crossway, east, west, south, and north, going from group to group, and the call was "Deliver up the horses." Here was gambling, there scalp-dancing; laughter in one place, mourning in another. Crowds were passing to and fro, whooping, yelling, dancing, drumming, singing. Men, women, and children were huddled together; flags flying, horses neighing, dogs howling, chained bears, tied wolves, grunting and growling, all pell-mell among the tents; and, to complete the confusion, the night was dark. At the end of each harangue the chief would approach me, and whisper in my ear, "She-augh tamtay enim"—I have spoken well in your favour—a hint for me to reward his zeal by giving him something. This was repeated constantly, and I gave him each time a string of beads, or two buttons, or two rings. I often thought he repeated his harangues more frequently than was necessary; but it answered his purpose, and I had no choice but to obey and pay.

At daylight we got back; my people and property were safe; and in two hours after my 85 horses were delivered up, and in our possession. I was now convinced of the chief's influence, and had got so well into his good graces with my beads, buttons, and rings, that I hoped we were out of all our troubles. Our business being done, I ordered my men to tie up and prepare for home, which was glad tidings to them. With all this favourable change, we were much embarrassed and annoyed in our preparations to start. The savages interrupted us every moment. They jeered the men, frightened the horses, and kept handling, snapping, and firing off our guns; asking for this, that, and the other thing. The men's hats, pipes, belts, and knives were constantly in their hands. They wished to see everything, and everything they saw they wished to get, even to the buttons on their clothes. Their teasing curiosity had no bounds; and every delay increased our difficulties. Our patience was put to the test a thousand times; but at last we got ready, and my men started. To amuse the Indians, however, till they could get fairly off, I invited the chiefs to a parley, which I put a stop to as soon as I thought the men and horses had got clear of the camp. I then prepared to follow them, when a new difficulty arose. In the hurry and bustle of starting, my people had left a restive, awkward brute of a horse for me, wild as a deer, and as full of latent tricks as he was wild. I mounted and dismounted at least a dozen times; in vain I tried to make him advance. He reared, jumped, and plunged; but refused to walk, trot, or gallop. Every trial to make him go was a failure. A young conceited fop of an Indian, thinking he could make more of him than I could, jumped on his back; the horse reared and plunged as before, when, instead of slackening the bridle as he reared, he reined it tighter and tighter, till the horse fell right over on his back, and almost killed the fellow. Here Eyacktana, with a frown, called out, "Kap-sheesh she-eam"—the bad horse—and gave me another; and for the generous act I gave him my belt, the only article I had to spare. But although the difficulties I had with the horse were galling enough to me, they proved a source of great amusement to the Indians, who enjoyed it with roars of laughter. Before taking my leave of Eyacktana, it is but justice to say that, with all his faults, he had many good qualities, and I was under great obligations to him.

I now made the best of my way out of the camp, and to make up for lost time, took a short cut; but for many miles could see nothing of my people, and began to be apprehensive that they had been waylaid and cut off. Getting to the top of a high ridge, I stopped a little to look about me, but could see nothing of them. I had not been many minutes there, however, before I perceived three horsemen coming down an adjacent hill at full tilt.

Taking them for enemies, I descended the height, swam my horse across a river at the bottom of it, and taking shelter behind a rock, dismounted to wait my pursuers. There I primed my rifle anew, and said to myself, "I am sure of two shots, and my pistols will be more than a match for the other." The moment they got to the opposite bank, I made signs for them to keep back, or I would fire on them; but my anxiety was soon removed by their calling out, "As-nack-shee-lough, as-nack-shee-lough"—your friends, your friends. These friendly fellows had been all the time lurking about in anxious suspense, to see what would become of us. Two of them were the very couriers who had, as already stated, strongly tried to turn us back. I was overjoyed at this meeting; yet still anxious, as they had seen nothing of my men, to find whom we all set off, and came up with them a little before sun-down. When we first discovered them, they were driving furiously; but all at once the horses stood still. I suspected something, and told the Indians to remain behind, while I alone went on to see what was the matter; when, as I had expected, seeing four riders following them at full gallop, they took us for enemies, as I had done before, and left the horses to take up a position of defence behind the trees, where they might receive us; and we should have met with a warm reception, for M'Kay, although young, was as brave as a lion. But they were soon agreeably surprised, and the matter as soon explained. I then made signs for the Indians to come forward. The moment we all joined together, we alighted, changed horses, and drove on until midnight, when we took shelter in a small thicket of woods, and passed the night with our guns in our hands.

At dawn of day we again set off; and at three o'clock in the afternoon reached the banks of the Columbia, some six miles beyond the mouth of the Pisscows River, where we considered ourselves out of danger. I then started on a-head, in company with the friendly Indians, to see if the two women had arrived; and as good luck would have it, we found them with a canoe ready to ferry us across. They had reached the place about an hour before us; and we will give our readers a brief outline of their adventures.

On leaving us, instead of taking directly to the mountains, they, in the darkness of the night, bridled two of the Indians' horses, and rode them for several hours, till they were far beyond the camp; but as soon as it was daylight, they turned the horses adrift, and entered the mountains on foot. In the hurry of starting, they had forgot to take a fire, steel, or anything to make fire with, and had been three days and nights without food or fire. A short time, however, before I had reached them, they had met some friendly Indians who had ministered to their wants. During the four days of their pilgrimage they rode 18 miles, travelled

54, and paddled 66, making in all 138 miles. We now hasten to resume our narrative.

In a short time the two men arrived with all the horses; but could give no account of M'Kay. I therefore immediately sent them back with an Indian in search of him, while I and the other Indians were occupied in passing over the horses; for during high water, the Pisscows River is very broad at its mouth. Some time after dark the men arrived with the news that they had found M'Kay, lying some distance from the road in an almost lifeless state, and unable either to ride or be carried. In this state of things I had no alternative but to send back the two men with two Indians, to have him brought in the canoe. About midnight they all arrived; poor M'Kay was in a very low and dangerous state, having by some mishap which he could not well explain, dislocated his hip-joint; after much trouble I got it replaced again, and he gradually came round; but as he could neither ride nor walk, I was reduced to the necessity of hiring two of the Indians to paddle him home in the canoe. Meanwhile, the two men, women, and myself continued our journey, and reached Oakanagan in safety, after an absence of seventeen days; but the Indians only got there with M'Kay four days after us, and from the hot weather and hardness of the canoe he suffered very much. The limb had again got out of joint, and was so much swollen that it resisted all my efforts to get it reduced, so that he never got the better of it, but remained lame till the day of his death. Thus terminated one of the most trying and hazardous trips I ever experienced in the country.

As soon as Mr. M'Kay was out of danger, I left him, and set off with all haste to Fort Spokane, distant about 160 miles south-east from Oakanagan, with 55 of our horses. On our way, both going and coming, we made a short stay at a place called the Grand Coulé, one of the most romantic, picturesque, and marvellously-formed chasms west of the Rocky Mountains. If you glance at the map of Columbia, you will see, some distance above the great Forks, a barren plain, extending from the south to the north branch of that magnificent stream; there, in the direction of nearly south and north, lies the Grand Coulé, some 80 or 100 miles in length. No one travelling in these parts ought to resist paying a visit to the wonder of the west. Without, however, being able to account for the cause of its formation, we shall proceed to give a brief description of this wonderful chasm, or channel, as it now is, and perhaps has been since the creation.

The sides, or banks, of the Grand Coulé are for the most part formed of basalt rocks, in some places as high as 150 feet, with shelving steps, formed like stairs, to ascend and descend, and not unfrequently vaults, or excavated tombs, as if cut through the solid rocks, like the dark and porous catacombs of Keif. The bottom, or bed, deep and broad, consists of a conglomerate of sand and clay, hard and smooth where not interrupted by rocks. The whole presents in every respect the appearance of the deep bed of a great river or lake, now dry, scooped out of the level and barren plain. The sight in many places is truly magnificent: while in one place the solemn gloom forbids the wanderer to advance, in another the prospect is lively and inviting, the ground being thickly studded with ranges of columns, pillars, battlements, turrets, and steps above steps, in every variety of shade and colour. Here and there, endless vistas and subterraneous labyrinths add to the beauty of the scene; and what is still more singular in this arid and sandy region, cold springs are frequent; yet there is never any water in the chasm, unless after recent rains. Thunder and lightning are known to be more frequent here than in other parts; and a rumbling in the earth is sometimes heard. According to Indian tradition, it is the abode of evil spirits. In the neighbourhood there is neither hill nor dale, lake nor mountain, creek nor rivulet, to give variety to the surrounding aspect. Altogether it is a charming assemblage of picturesque objects for the admirer of nature. It is the wonder of the Oregon.

We shall now digress for a short space, and return to Fort George. In 1811, three men belonging to the Pacific Fur Company had been murdered by the natives; but as the murderers could not be traced out, the deed was never avenged. We, however, had no sooner taken our departure for the interior, than the murderers considered it unnecessary to conceal the deed any longer: since the "Americans," as we were called, had left the country, they thought all was safe, and consequently joined their relations at Fort George. Their return to the neighbourhood had been made known to the whites, who, in order to make an example of them, and strike terror into evil-doers, wished to apprehend them. For some time these natives contrived to elude their vigilance. The whites, however, were not to be foiled in their attempt to get hold of them. To attain the desired end they were obliged to have recourse to some of the friendly Indians, who soon found out the secret haunts of the murderers, hunted them up, and delivered them into their hands. Three were implicated, and found guilty of the murder, on Indian evidence, and were condemned to be shot. Capital punishment was inflicted upon two of them; but the third was pardoned and set at liberty. The conduct of the murderers may serve to throw some light on their knowledge of right and wrong, and on the character of these Indians generally. The three villains fled towards the south as soon as they had committed the deed, nor did they ever return, or make their appearance in that quarter, until they heard that the "Americans" had left the country.

The punishment of the offenders, however, gave great offence to many of the surrounding tribes, who thought that the north-westers had no right to kill their relations. The deed not being committed in their day, nor on their own people, they said the act on their part was mere cruelty, arising from hatred of the Indians; and that in consequence they must be their enemies. Jealousy had also its influence: seeing that those Indians friendly to the whites had been so liberally rewarded for their zeal in apprehending the criminals, others were displeased that they had not come in for a share of the booty. The Indians took up arms, and threatened to expel the whites from the country. This manifestation of hostility on the part of the natives gathered strength daily, and kept the whites in constant alarm; more especially as there were but few of them to resist so formidable a combination: it even threatened for a time the security of the North-West Company's possessions on the Columbia.

In the midst of this hostile flame, as good fortune would have it, the long-expected ship, *Isaac Todd*, from London, arrived, and cast anchor in front of Fort George, with ample supplies both of men and means. Her seasonable appearance struck such awe into the rebellious savages that, partly through fear and partly in anticipation of the good things to come, they sued for peace, which was granted; and all became quiet and tranquil once more. The *Isaac Todd's* presence shed a momentary gleam of light over the north-west affairs: in short, gave a new impulse to all their measures in the far west. After a short stay at the Columbia, smoothing down all difficulties with the Indians, and taking on board the furs and peltries belonging to the late American adventurers, the vessel sailed for Canton. The joy which her timely arrival caused was but of short duration, and it had scarcely time to be announced in another express to Fort William,* when again the aspect of affairs was clouded by a sad misfortune.

On the 22nd of May, some time after the arrival of the *Isaac Todd*, a boat containing Messrs. Donald M'Tavish and Alexander Henry, two partners of long standing and high reputation in the service, with six men, was swamped, all hands perishing, in crossing the river, with the exception of one man. Although the accident took place in broad daylight, and in front of the fort, the circumstance was not perceived or known for some hours after, when John Little, the man who was saved, arrived at the fort, and communicated the intelligence. We shall give the sad tale in his own words.

"We pushed from the wharf," said John Little,

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* Fort William was the principal depôt of the North-West Company, on the east side of the Rocky Mountains, and is situated on the north shore of Lake Superior, in lat. 48° 24' N., and long. 89° 23' W.

"at five o'clock in the afternoon, the wind blowing a gale at the time, and the tide setting in. The boat was ballasted with stones; we were eight on board, and there was a heavy surf about two miles out in the stream; she filled, and sank like a stone. A terrible shriek closed the scene. The top of the mast was still above the surface of the water; I got hold of it, but the first or second swell swept me away. In a moment nothing was to be seen or heard but the rolling waves and whistling winds. Jack, a young sailor lad, and I took to swimming, and with great exertions reached a dry sand-bank in the channel, about three-quarters of a mile a-head of us; but the tide flowing at the time, and forced by the gale, soon set us afloat. Here we shook hands, bade each other farewell, and took to swimming again. At the distance of a mile we reached another flat sand-bank; but the tide got there nearly as soon as ourselves, and we were again soon afloat. Jack was much exhausted, and I was little better; and the wet and cold had so benumbed us that we had scarcely any feeling or strength. We now shook hands again, anxiously looking for relief towards the fort. Here poor Jack began to cry like a child, and refused for some time to let go my hand. I told him to take courage; and pointing to a stump a-head of us, said to him, 'If we get there we shall be safe.' Then bidding each other adieu, we once more took to swimming, in hopes of reaching the stump I had pointed to, which was better than half a mile off. I reached and grasped it with almost my last breath; but poor Jack, although within ten yards of it, could not do so—it was too much for him, and I could render him no assistance. Here he struggled and sank; and I saw him no more. I had been grasping the stump, with the clutch of despair, for more than half an hour, when, fortunately, a little before dusk, an Indian canoe passing along shore, discovered my situation and saved my life. The water had reached my middle, and I was insensible." One of the Indians who had brought Little to the fort remarked: "When we got to him he was speechless, and yet his fingers were sunk in the wood, so that we could hardly get his hands from the stump."

Perils by water were not Little's only dangers, as we learned from one of the Indians who rescued him. He was within an ace of being shot as well as drowned. The moment the people in the canoe came in sight of the stump, one of the Indians, pointing to it, said to his comrades, "Look! what is that leaning on the stump?" Another called out, "A sea otter, or a seal: come let us have a shot at it." Both at that instant taking up their guns, made signs to the person steering to make for the stump slowly. While the canoe was thus making for the stump, the two men held their guns ready cocked to have a shot: "Shoot now," said one of them to the other. The canoe was all this time nearing the object, and the two anxious marksmen were on their knees with their guns pointed—when a woman in the canoe, bawled out to the men, "Alkè, Alkè, Tillâ-kome, Tillâ-kome"—Stop, stop! a man, a man! At this timely warning the men lowered their guns to look, and in a few minutes the boat was at the stump; seeing Little, the fellows put their hands to their mouths, exclaiming in the Chinook dialect, "Naw-weet-ka, naw-weet-ka"—It is true, it is true. To the keen eye of this woman, poor Little owed his life at last.

Following the *Isaac Todd*, there arrived from the same port a schooner called the *Columbia*. This vessel was intended for the China and coasting trades, and Angus Bethune, Esq., a north-west partner, was appointed supercargo. A voyage or two across the Pacific, however, convinced the north-westers that the project would not succeed. The port duties at Canton, connected with other unavoidable expenses, absorbed all the profits; and this branch of their trade was relinquished as unprofitable. Even the coast trade itself was far from being so productive as might be expected, owing to the great number of coasting vessels which came from all parts of the States, especially Boston, all more or less connected with the Sandwich Islands and China trade. Competition had, therefore, almost ruined the coast trade, and completely spoiled the Indians.

Having glanced at the affairs of Fort George and the coast trade, we now resume the business of the interior. It will be in the recollection of the reader, that we left the spring brigade at Oakanagan, and our friends journeying on their way to Canada. From Oakanagan I proceeded northward, some 300 miles, to my own post at the She-whaps. There being now no rivalry there, or elsewhere, to contend with, I put the business in train for the season, and immediately returned again, with the view of being able to carry into effect a project of discovery, which I and others had contemplated for some time before: this was, to penetrate across land from Oakanagan, due west, to the Pacific, on foot, a distance supposed not to exceed 200 miles; and for the performance of which I had allowed two months.

The undertaking had often been talked of, but as often failed to be put into execution. This was, however, the first time the project had been attempted by any white man; and as the season of the year was favourable, and a knowledge of that part of the country held out a good prospect for extending the trade, I was anxious to see it explored, and the question set at rest. Men, however, being scarce with us this year, I determined on trying with Indians alone; placing, at that time, more faith in their zeal, fortitude, and perseverance, than ever I felt disposed to do afterwards. Having procured a guide and two other natives, myself being the fourth person, we prepared, with all the confidence that hope could inspire, for the execution of my plan.

On the 25th of July we set out on our journey, our guns in our hands, each with a blanket on his back, a kettle, fire-steel, and three days' provisions. We depended on our guns for our subsistence: indeed, the only baggage we encumbered ourselves with consisted of ammunition. Crossing the Oakanagan, we followed the west bank of the Columbia in a south-west course—distance eight miles—till we reached the mouth of the Meat-who River, a considerable stream issuing at the foot of the mountains, along the south bank of which we ascended; but, from its rocky sides and serpentine courses, we were unable to follow it. We therefore struck off to the left; and after a short distance entered a pathless desert, in a course due west. The first mountain, on the east side, is high and abrupt. Here our guide kept telling us that we should follow the same road as the Red Fox chief and his men used to go. Seeing no track, nor the appearance of any road, I asked him where the Red Fox road was. "This is it that we are on," said he, pointing before us. "Where?" said I: "I see no road here, not even so much as a rabbit could walk on." "Oh, there is no road," rejoined he; "but this is the place where they used to pass." When an Indian, in his metaphorical mode of expression, tells you anything, you are not to suppose that you understand him, or that he literally speaks the truth. The impression on my mind was, that we should, at least occasionally, have fallen upon some sort of a road, or path, to conduct us along; but nothing of the kind was to be seen. The Red Fox here spoken of, was the head chief of the Oakanagan nation, and had formerly been in the habit of going to the Pacific on trading excursions, carrying with him a species of wild hemp, which the Indians along the Pacific make fishing nets of, and in exchange the Oakanagans bring back marine shells and other trinkets, articles of value among the Indians. After we entered the forest, our course was W. 2 miles, N.W. 1, S.W. 1, W. by S. 1, W. 3—distance, eight miles.

On the 26th.—We made an early start this morning; course as nearly as possible due west. But not half an hour had passed, before we had to steer to every point of the compass, so many impediments crossed our path. On entering the dense and gloomy forest, I tried my pocket compass, but to very little purpose, as we could not in many places travel fifty yards in any one direction, so rocky and uneven was the surface over which we had to pass: using the compass made us lose too much time, and as I placed implicit confidence in my guide I laid it by. On seeing me set the compass, the guide, after staring with amazement for some time, asked me what it was. I told him it was the white man's guide. "Can it speak?" he asked. "No," replied I, it cannot speak. "Then what is the good of it?" rejoined he. "It will show us the right road to any quarter," answered I. "Then what did you want with me, since you had a guide of your own?" This retort came rather unexpectedly, but taking hold of my double-barrelled gun in one hand and a single one in the other, I asked him which of the two were best. "The two barrelled," said he; "because, if one barrel miss fire, you have another." "It is the same with guides," said I; "if one fails, we have another." Courses to-day, W. 4, N.W. 1, N.N.W. 1, S.W. 2, W. 5, N. by W. 6.

On the 27th.—Weather cold and rainy; still we kept advancing, through a rugged and broken country, in a course almost due west; but camped early on account of the bad weather, having travelled about ten miles. The next day we made a long journey; general course W. by N.; saw several deer, and killed one. The drumming partridges were very numerous, so that we had always plenty to eat. We met with banks of snow in the course of this day. Distance, eighteen miles.

On the 29th.—This morning we started in a southerly direction, but soon got to the west again. Country gloomy; forests almost impervious, with fallen as well as standing timber. A more difficult route to travel never fell to man's lot. On the heights the chief timber is a kind of spruce fir, not very large, only two or three feet in diameter. The valleys were filled with poplar, alder, stunted birch, and willows. This range of mountains, lying in the direction of nearly S. and N., are several hundred miles in length. The tracks of wild animals crossed our path in every direction. The leaves and decayed vegetation were uncommonly thick on the surface of the ground, and the mice and squirrels swarmed, and had riddled the earth like a sieve. The fallen timber lay in heaps, nor did it appear that the fire ever passed in this place. The surface of the earth appeared in perfect confusion; and the rocks and yawning chasms gave to the whole an air of solemn gloom and undisturbed silence. My companions began to flag during the day. Distance, fifteen miles.

On the 30th.—The sixth day, in the evening, we reached a height of land, which on the east side is steep and abrupt. Here we found the water running in the opposite direction. My guide unfortunately fell sick at this place, and we very reluctantly had to wait for two days until he recovered, when we resumed our journey; but his recovery was slow, and on the second day he gave up altogether, and could proceed no further. We were still among the rugged cliffs and deep groves of the mountain, where we seldom experienced the cheering sight of the sun; nor could we get to any elevated spot clear enough to have a view of the surrounding country. By getting to the top of a tall tree, now and then, we got some relief, and but little, for we could seldom see to any distance, so covered was all around us with a thick and almost impenetrable forest. The weather was cold, and snow-capped many of the higher peaks. In such a situation I found myself, and without a guide. To go forward without him was almost impossible; to turn back was labour lost; to remain where we were was anything but pleasant; to abandon the sick man to his fate was not to be thought of. The serious question then arose, what to do? At last, we settled the matter, so that one of the Indians should remain with the guide, and the other accompany me: I still intending to proceed. We then separated, I taking care every now and then, as we went along, to mark with a small axe some of the larger trees, to assist us in our way back, in case our compass got deranged; although, as I have already noticed, we but seldom used it while our guide was with us: but the case was different now, it was the only guide I had. Courses to-day, W. 5, N. 1, N.W. 2, N.E. 1, W. 9—distance eighteen miles.

August 4th.—We were early on the road this morning, and were favoured occasionally with open ground. We had not gone far when we fell on a small creek running, by compass, W.S.W., but so meandering, that we had to cross and recross it upwards of forty times in the course of the day. The water was clear and cold, and soon increased so much, that we had to avoid it, and steer our course from point to point on the north side. Its bottom was muddy in some places, in others stony; its banks low and lined with poplars; but so overhung with wood, that we could oftener hear than see the stream. On this unpromising stream, flowing, no doubt, to the Pacific, we saw six beaver lodges, and two of the animals themselves, one of which we shot. We shot a very fine otter also, and notwithstanding the season of the year, the fur was black. Tired and hungry, we put up at a late hour. Courses, W. 8, N.W. 5, W. 7, S.W. 2—distance travelled to-day, twenty-two miles.

On the 5th.—I slept but little during the night: my mind was too occupied to enjoy repose, so we got up and started at an early hour. Our journey to-day was through a delightful country, of hill and dale, wood and plains. Late in the afternoon, however, we were disturbed and greatly agitated, by a fearful and continuous noise in the air, loud as thunder, but with no intervals. Not a breath of wind ruffled the air; but towards the south-west, from whence the noise came, the whole atmosphere was darkened, black and heavy. Our progress was arrested, we stood and listened in anxious suspense for nearly half an hour, the noise still increasing, and coming, as it were, nearer and nearer to us. If I could compare it to anything, it would be to the rush of a heavy body of water, falling from a height; but when it came opposite to where we stood, in a moment we beheld the woods before it bending down like grass before the scythe! It was the wind, accompanied with a torrent of rain—a perfect hurricane, such as I had never witnessed before. It reminded me at once of those terrible visitations of the kind peculiar to tropical climates. Sometimes a slight tornado or storm of the kind has been experienced on the Oregon, but not often. The crash of falling trees, and the dark, heavy cloud, like a volume of condensed smoke, concealed from us at the time the extent of its destructive effects. We remained motionless until the storm was over. It lasted an hour; and, although it was scarcely a quarter of a mile from us, all we felt of it was a few heavy drops of rain, as cold as ice, with scarcely any wind: but the rolling cloud passed on, carrying destruction before it, as far as the eye could follow. In a short time, we perceived the havoc it had made, by the avenue it left behind. It had levelled everything in its way to the dust: the very grass was beaten down to the earth for nearly a quarter of a mile in breadth.

The Indian I had along with me was so amazed and thunderstruck with superstition and fear at what he had seen, that his whole frame became paralysed: he trembled, and sighed to get back. He refused to accompany me any further; and all I could either say or do could not turn him from his purpose. At last, seeing all mild endeavours fail, I had recourse to threats; I told him I would tie him to a tree and proceed alone. At last he consented, and we advanced to the verge of the storm-fallen timber, and encamped for the night.

We saw a good many beaver lodges along the little river, and some small lakes; deer were grazing in herds like domestic cattle, and so very tame that we might have shot as many of them as we chose. Their curiosity exceeded our own, and often proved fatal to them. The little river at this place seemed to take a bend nearly due north; it was twenty-two yards wide, and so deep that we could scarcely wade across it. I gave it the name of "West River." Here the timber was much larger than any we had yet seen, some of the trees measuring five and six feet in diameter. Courses to-day, W. 12, N.W. 2, S. 1, S.W. 2, W. 9—distance, 26 miles; making from Oakanagan, to point Turn-about, 151 miles.

After we had put up for the night, it was evident my companion was brooding and unsettled in his mind, for he scarcely spoke a word: although he had consented to continue the journey, I could easily see his reluctance, and being apprehensive that he might try and play me a trick, I endeavoured to watch his motions as closely as possible during the night; yet, in spite of all my watchfulness, he managed to give me the slip, and in the morning I found myself alone! I looked about in all directions for him, but to no purpose: the fellow had taken to his heels and deserted. There was no alternative but to yield to circumstances, and retrace my steps; and this was the more galling, as I was convinced in my own mind, that in a few days more I should have reached the ocean, and accomplished my object. I paused and reflected, but all to no purpose: Fate had decreed against me. With reluctant steps I turned back, and made the best of my way to where I had left my guide. I reached the place, after intense anxiety, at four o'clock in the afternoon of the third day, having scarcely eaten a mouthful of food all the time. I arrived just in time; as the men were in the act of tying up their bundles, and preparing to start on their homeward journey.

The guide was still somewhat ailing, and the fellow who had left me was little better; for, in hurrying back, he had overheated himself, which, together with the fright, had thrown him into a fever; nor was I in too good a humour: hungry, angry, fatigued and disappointed, I sat down, as grim and silent as the rest; nor did a word pass between us for a while. After some time, however, I tried to infuse some ambition and perseverance into the fellows, to get them to resume the journey; but to no purpose: they were destitute of moral courage—a characteristic defect of their race. I had been taught a good lesson, which I remembered ever after, not to place too much faith in Indians.

After remaining one night at the guide's encampment, we turned our faces towards home. Wild animals were very numerous, far more so than on our first passing. Whether it was the late storm that had disturbed them in another quarter, or some other cause, we could not determine; but they kept rustling through the woods, crossing our path in every direction, as if bewildered. We shot several red deer, three black bears, a wolf and fisher, and arrived at Oakanagan on the 24th of August, after a fruitless and disagreeable journey of thirty days. And here my guide told me, that in four days from point Turn-about, had we continued, we should have reached the Ocean.

After remaining for a few days at Oakanagan, I visited the She-whaps, but soon returned again to the former place, to meet the fall express from the east of the mountains. After a few hours delay at Oakanagan, the express proceeded on its way to Fort George, but was stopped at the Forks on its way down; the Cayouse and Nez-Percés, Indians of the plains, being encamped there in great numbers. On perceiving the boat sweeping down, and keeping the middle of the stream as if anxious to pass the camp unnoticed, according to north-west custom, the Indians made signs for the whites to put on shore. The first signal passing unheeded, a shot was next fired a-head to bring them to; and this also passing without notice, a second shot was fired at the boat; the gentleman in charge then ordered the steersman to make for the land. On arriving at the camp, the Indians plunged into the water, and taking hold of the boat, hauled her up on the beach, high and dry, with the crew still on board; nor would they allow the people to depart till they had smoked themselves drunk, when pushing the craft into the water again, they made signs for them to depart; at the same time, admonishing them never to attempt passing their camp again without first putting on shore and giving them a smoke.

On the departure of the express, I took a trip as far as Spokane House. This district, with its several outposts, was under the superintendence of John George M'Tavish, Esq., to whom I related the result of my trip of discovery. Returning home, I passed the remainder of the winter at Oakanagan, that being now a part of the northern district.

The spring being somewhat early this year, and all hands having mustered at the Forks, the general rendezvous for mutual safety, we took the current for head quarters, and arrived at Fort George on the 10th of June, 1815.

## CHAPTER II.

Council—Result—Anxiety of the subordinates—Departure of the Brigade—Sanguine expectations—Bulky cargoes—Men and means—Airy projects—Tongue point—Gloomy prospects—Cayouse Indians—Disastrous conflict—Two Indians shot—The sandy island—Perilous situation of the whites—A bold step—Indians distrustful—Negotiation—Rocky Mountains—A boat lost—Forlorn party—Four men starved to death—Charette murdered—Remarks—Parley with Ye-whell-come-tetsa, the chief—Story of the wolves—Horses killed—Wolves destroyed—The lost trap—The pursuit—Ravenous wolves—Their mode of attacking horses—Conflicting points—Perplexities at head quarters—Councils divided—Comparison between Indians on the east and west side of the mountains—A brief review of the characteristics of each section—Natives—Climates—Resources—Hostilities of the Columbia Indians—The cause—General remarks—Cedar boats—Birch-rind canoes—Head quarters—Change of system—Iroquois trappers.

A COUNCIL sits annually at head quarters, which regulates all the important matters of the Company for the current year; but no person of less dignity than a bourgeois or proprietor is admitted to a seat, except by special invitation. The council of this year was strengthened by the arrival of three new functionaries from the east side of the mountains, yet nothing new transpired. The members sat for four days (nearly double the usual time), but no new channel was opened for extending the trade, nor was there the least deviation from the old and contemned system of their predecessors. The decision of the council was, that there existed no new field that could be opened to advantage; consequently every one was again appointed to his old post, and I, of course, to mine.

During the sittings, there is always a strong manifestation of anxiety out of doors, each one being desirous to know his appointment for the year; for it not unfrequently happens, that officers are changed without much ceremony, particularly if there be any individual who is not easily managed. And for an obnoxious person to be removed to the most remote corner of the country this year, and to some other equally remote next, by way of taming him, is not at all uncommon.

But this part of their policy is not confined to the subordinates, it reaches even to the bourgeois, who is not unfrequently admonished, by the example of others, that he stands on the brink of a precipice; for, if too refractory in the council, he is sure to get his appointment at such a distance, and under such circumstances, as to exclude most effectually his attending the meetings for some length of time. This is the course generally adopted to get rid of an importunate and troublesome member, whether of high or low rank in the service; or to remove such as the Company are not disposed to, or cannot conveniently, provide for.

The council being over, the business of the year settled, and the annual ship arrived, the different parties destined for the interior and east side of the mountains took their departure from Fort George on the 25th of June. We shall leave them to prosecute their journey, for a short time, while we glance at another subject.

No sooner had the north-westers inherited the Oregon, notwithstanding the unfavourable decision of our western council, than ship after ship doubled Cape Horn in regular succession, with bulky cargoes to the full of every demand; selections of their partners, clerks, and Canadians constantly crossed over the dividing ridge; but all proved abortive in bringing about that rich harvest which they had expected.

We may now remark on the effect produced on affairs by the country falling into the hands of new masters. Day after day passed by, yet the ordinary dull routine of things continued; and a spectator might have read in the countenances of our great men something like disappointment. The more they wished to deviate, the more closely they imitated the policy of their predecessors; with this difference, however, that, in every step they took, their awkwardness pointed them out as strangers. They found fault with everything, yet could mend nothing. Even the establishment at Fort George could not please them; therefore a fort built upon a large scale, and at a greater elevation, was more consonant to their ideas of grandeur; in consequence, the pinnacle of Tongue Point was soon to exhibit a Gibraltar of the west. An engineer was hired, great guns were ordered, men and means set to work, and rocks levelled; yet this residence, more fit for eagles than for men, was at last relinquished, and the contemned old fort was again adopted.

The inland brigade, whose departure has already been noticed, ascended the Columbia without any interruption until it had reached a little above the Walla Wallas; near to the spot where the Cayouse Indians had, in the preceding fall, stopped the express, and hauled the boat up high and dry on land. Here the Indians intended to play the same game over again, for when the whites were in the act of poling up a small but strong rapid, along shore, with the intention of stopping as soon as they got to the head of it, the Indians, who were still encamped there, insisted on their putting to shore at once. This invitation was, however, under existing circumstances, disregarded by the whites, as being almost impossible at the moment; when suddenly a party of the Indians mounted on horseback, plunged into the stream, and so barred the narrow channel through which the boats had to pass, that great confusion ensued. Still the whites, in their anxiety to get up the rapid, paid but little attention to them; which forbearance encouraged the Indians to resort to threats, by drawing their bows and menacing the whites. In this critical conjuncture the whites seized their arms, and made signs to the Indians to withdraw; but this only encouraged them the more to resist, and throwing themselves from their horses into the water, they laid hold of the boats. The struggle and danger now increased every moment, as the Indians were becoming more and more numerous and daring. The whites had not a moment to lose: they fired. Two Indians fell dead on the spot, a third was badly wounded, and all three floated down the current. The instant the shots went off, the Indians made for land, and the firing ceased. The whites, in the meantime, drifting down to the foot of the rapid, crossed the river to the opposite side, and soon after encamped for the night on a sandy island. Had the whites done what they ought to have done, from the lesson of the previous year at this place—put ashore at the foot of the rapid,—no difficulties would have ensued, and no blood would have been shed.

On the next morning the Indians assembled in fearful numbers, and kept up an occasional firing at the whites on the island, at too great a distance to do any harm; and as the whites escaped without injury, they did not return the fire. The greatest annoyance was, that the whites could not proceed on their journey before the natives mustered in great numbers; for it blew almost a hurricane. The cloud of dust which the wind raised about their encampment was some punishment for the deed they had committed. The whites, seeing it impossible to remain any longer on the island, adopted a bold and vigorous resolution. After appointing fifteen resolute fellows to guard the property, they embarked, to the number of seventy-five men well armed, made for the shore, and, landing a little from the Indian camp, hoisted a flag, inviting the chiefs to a parley. But the Indians were distrustful: treacherous themselves, they expected the whites to be so also; they therefore hesitated to approach. At last, however, after holding a consultation, they advanced in solemn procession, to the number of eighty-four. After a three hours' negotiation, the whites paid for the two dead bodies, according to Indian custom, and took their leave in peace and safety: and thus ended the disagreeable affair.

From Hostile Island our friends continued their voyage without any other casualty, until they reached the Rocky Mountains; but there fatal disasters awaited them. The waters being unusually high, much time was lost in ascending the current, so that by the time they arrived at Portage Point their provisions got short; some of the hands falling sick also, and being unable to undertake the difficult portage of eighty miles on foot, the gentleman in charge had no alternative left but to fit out and send back a boat from that place w[illegible]even men, three of whom were unable to undertake the portage. After being furnished with some provisions, the returning party took the current; but on reaching the Dalles des Morts they disembarked, contrary to the usual practice, to haul the craft down by a line; unfortunately, they quarrelled among themselves, and letting go the line, in an instant the boat, wheeling round, was dashed to pieces on the rocks, and lost.

The sick and feeble party had now no alternative, but either to starve or walk a distance of 300 miles, over a country more fit for goats than for men. All their provisions were lost with the boat; neither were they provided with guns nor ammunition for such a journey, even had they been in health. In this forlorn state, they quarrelled again, and separated. Two of the strongest and most expert succeeded in reaching the establishments below, after suffering every hardship that human beings could endure. The other five remained, of whom one man alone survived, deriving his wretched subsistence from the bodies of his fallen comrades. This man reached Oakanagan, more like a ghost than a living creature, after a lapse of two months.

From these sad details, we now turn to record the passing events of the northern quarter. After a short stay at Oakanagan, I set out for my post at the She-whaps, and reached that place in the month of August. During my absence, a man by the name of Charette, whom I had left in charge, had been murdered. Charette was an honest fellow, and deserved a better fate. The murderer was a young Indian lad, who had been brought up at the establishment. They had gone on a trip to Fraser's River, six days' journey due north, and had quarrelled one evening about making the encampment. During the dispute, the Indian said nothing; but rising a short time afterwards, and laying hold of Charette's own gun, he suddenly turned round and shot him dead, without saying a word, and then deliberately sat down again! This was proved by a third person then present. Several instances of this kind have happened within my own knowledge, and it was a general remark, that all those Indians who had been harboured among the whites were far more malevolent and treacherous than those who had never had the same indulgence shown to them.

These remarks lead me to another circumstance, which gave rise to great uneasiness among the natives along the banks of the Columbia; for the Indians never fail to magnify and represent in a distorted light everything, however trivial.

One day, Ye-whell-come-tetsa, the principal Oakanagan chief, came to me with a serious countenance, saying he had bad news to tell me, adding, "I fear you will not believe me, for the whites say that Indians have two mouths, and often tell lies; but I never tell lies: the whites' know that I have but one word, and that word is truth." "The whites," said I, "never doubt the words of a chief. But come, let us hear: what is it?" "My son," said he, "has just arrived from below, and has reported (and his report is always true) that there is a great band of strange wolves, some hundreds in number, and as big as buffaloes, coming up along the river. They kill every horse: none can escape them: they have already killed thousands, and we shall all be ruined: they are so fierce that no men can approach them, and so strong and hairy that neither arrows nor balls can kill them. And you," said he to me, "will lose all yours also, for they travel so fast that they will be here in two nights." I tried to console the melancholy chief, gave him some tobacco, and told him not to be discouraged; that, if the wolves came to attack our horses, we should certainly kill them: that we had balls that would kill anything. With this assurance he seemed pleased, and went off to circulate the opinion of the whites among his own people. I had heard the report respecting the wolves some time before the chief had told me, for these things spread like wildfire. I was convinced that some horses had been killed: it was a common occurrence; for not a year passes, when the snows are deep, and often when there is no snow at all, without such things happening; but, as to anything else, I looked upon it as a mere fable.

On the third day after my parley with the chief, sure enough the wolves did come, and killed, during the first night, five of our horses. On discovering in the morning the havoc the unwelcome visitors had made, I got a dozen steel traps set in the form of a circle round the carcase of one of the dead horses; then removing the others, and keeping a strict guard on the live stock, we waited with anxiety for the morning. Taking a man with me, and our rifles, we set out to visit the traps; on reaching the spot, we found four of them occupied. One of them held a large white wolf by the fore leg, a foot equally large was gnawed off and left in another, the third held a fox, and the fourth trap had disappeared altogether. The prisoner held by the leg was still alive, and certainly, as the chief said, a more ferocious animal I never saw. It had marked and cut the trap in many places; it had gnawed and almost consumed a block of oak, which held fast the chain, and in its fruitless efforts had twisted several links in the chain itself. From the moment we approached it, all its efforts were directed towards us. For some time we stood witnessing its manœuvres, but it never once turned round to fly from us; on the contrary, now and then it sprang forward to get at us, with its mouth wide open, teeth all broken, and its head covered with blood. The foot which the trap held was gnawed, the bone broken, and nothing holding it but the sinews. Its appearance kept us at a respectful distance, and although we stood with our guns cocked, we did not consider ourselves too safe, for something might have given way, and if so, we should have regretted our curiosity; so we fired two shots, and put an end to its sufferings. Its weight was a hundred and twenty-seven pounds; and the skin, which I gave to the chief, was considered as a valuable relic. "This," said he, holding up the skin in one hand, "is the most valuable thing I ever possessed." The white wolf skin in season is esteemed an article of royalty; it is one of the chief honours of the chieftainship, and much used by these people in their religious ceremonies: and this kind of wolf is not numerous. "While I have this," exclaimed he, "we have nothing to fear: strange wolves will kill no more of our horses. I shall always love the whites." Leaving the chief in a joyful humour, the man and myself followed the faint traces of the lost trap which occasionally appeared upon the crust of the snow. Having proceeded for some miles, we at length discovered the wolf with the trap at his heels, making the best of his way over a rugged and broken surface of rocks, ravines, hills and dales; sometimes going north, sometimes south, in zig-zag courses, to suit his escape and deceive us; he scampered along at a good trot, keeping generally about a quarter of a mile a-head of us. We had not been long in the pursuit, however, before the man I had with me, in his anxiety to advance, fell and hurt himself, and had to return home; I, however, continued the pursuit with great eagerness for more than six hours, until I got a shot. It proved effectual. Had any one else done it I should have praised him; for at the distance of one hundred and twelve yards, when nothing but the head of the wolf appeared, my faithful and trusty rifle arrested his career and put an end to the chase, after nearly a whole day's anxious pursuit.

Some idea of the animal's strength may be conveyed to our readers, from the fact, that it had dragged a trap and chain, weighing eight pounds and a half, by one of its claws, a distance of twenty-five miles, without appearing in the least fatigued. The prize lay at my feet, when another difficulty presented itself,—I had no knife with me, and I wanted the skin. Taking, therefore, according to Indian habit, the flint out of my gun, I managed to do the business, and home with the skin and trap I hied my way, no less fatigued than pleased with my success.

Thus we succeeded in destroying the three ringleaders of the destructive gang, which had caused so much anxiety and loss to the Indians; nor were there more, it would appear, than three of the large kind in the troop; for not another horse was killed during the season in all that part of the country. Wherever several of the larger wolves associate together for mischief, there is always a numerous train of smaller ones to follow in the rear, and act as auxiliaries in the work of destruction. Two large wolves, such as I have mentioned, are sufficient to destroy the most powerful horse, and seldom more than two ever begin the assault, although there may be a score in the gang. It is no less curious than amusing to witness their ingenious mode of attack.

If there is no snow, or but little, on the ground, two wolves approach in the most playful and caressing manner, lying, rolling, and frisking about, until the too credulous and unsuspecting victim is completely put off his guard by curiosity and familiarity. During this time the gang, squatted on their hind-quarters, look on at a distance. After some time spent in this way, the two assailants separate, when one approaches the horse's head, the other his tail, with a slyness and cunning peculiar to themselves. At this stage of the attack, their frolicsome approaches become very interesting—it is in right good earnest; the former is a mere decoy, the latter is the real assailant, and keeps his eyes steadily fixed on the ham-strings or flank of the horse. The critical moment is then watched, and the attack is simultaneous; both wolves spring at their victim the same instant, one to the throat, the other to the flank, and if successful, which they generally are, the hind one never lets go his hold till the horse is completely disabled. Instead of springing forward or kicking to disengage himself, the horse turns round and round without attempting a defence. The wolf before, then springs behind, to assist the other. The sinews are cut, and in half the time I have been describing it, the horse is on his side; his struggles are fruitless: the victory is won. At this signal, the lookers-on close in at a gallop, but the small fry of followers keep at a respectful distance, until their superiors are gorged, then they take their turn unmolested. The wolves, however, do not always kill to eat; like wasteful hunters, they often kill for the pleasure of killing, and leave the carcases untouched. The helplessness of the horse when attacked by wolves is not more singular than its timidity and want of action when in danger by fire. When assailed by fire, in the plains or elsewhere, their strength, swiftness, and sagacity, are of no avail; they never attempt to fly, but become bewildered in the smoke, turn round and round, stand and tremble, until they are burnt to death: which often happens in this country, in a conflagration of the plains.

No wild animal in this country stands less in awe of man than the wolf, nor is there any animal we know that is so fierce. The bear, on most occasions, tries to fly from man, and is only bold and ferocious when actually attacked, wounded, or in defence of her young. The wild buffaloes are the same; but the wolf, on the contrary, has often been known to attack man; and at certain seasons of the year—the spring for instance—it is man's wisdom to fly from him. Some time ago, a band of seventeen wolves forced two of our men to take shelter for several hours in a tree, and although they had shot two of the most forward of them before they got to the tree for protection, the others, instead of dispersing, kept close at their heels. Wolves are as ferocious among themselves as they are voracious. I have more than once seen a large wolf lay hold of a small one, kill it on the spot, and feast on the smoking carcase. When the Indians are apprehensive of an attack from them, they always contrive to light a fire.

I passed this winter between the She-whaps and Oakanagan; sometimes at the one, sometimes at the other, constantly employed in the pursuit of furs.

It often puzzled myself, as well as others, to know what the north-westers had in view by grasping at the entire trade of the Oregon, and running down the policy of their predecessors, since they did not take a single step to improve the trade, or to change the policy which they condemned. The most indifferent could remark upon this apathy and want of energy, among men whose renown for enterprise on the east side of the mountains put to shame all competition, and carried everything before it.

Three years had elapsed since they were in possession of the trade from sea to sea, and since they enjoyed the full and undivided commerce of the Columbia River. In this part, however, their trade fell greatly short of their expectations, or their known success elsewhere; and, instead of the anticipated prize, they found, after so long a trial, nothing else but disappointment and a uniform series of losses and misfortunes. As the quantity of furs, on an average, did not diminish, but rather increased from year to year, it was observed by the more discerning part, that the country was not barren in peltries, and that there existed some defect in the management of their concern.

Expresses were frequently sent to the Company's head quarters at Fort William, dwelling on the poverty of the country, the impracticability of trade, and the hostility of the natives. In this manner the Company were kept in the dark, as to the value of the country. The round of extravagance went on; every one in turn made the best of not deviating from the steps of his predecessor, but adhered as much as possible to the old habits, while jaunting up and down the river in the old beaten path.

In the meantime, the Company, who had placed implicit confidence in the assertions of their copartners, began to waver in their opinions of the recent acquisitions, when they found that their coffers were drained for the support of an empty name. They became divided in their councils; a great majority were inclined to throw up this cumbersome portion of their trade, while a few, more determined, were for giving it a further trial: for the members of this Company were no less noted for their tenacity of what they already possessed, than for their eagerness to seize every possible opportunity of increasing their overgrown territory.

The maxims of trade followed by the Company on the east of the mountains, their mode of voyaging, and their way of dealing with Indians, has been sanctioned by long experience as the best calculated for them. These maxims are, nevertheless, founded on false principles, and when they are reduced to practice in the western districts, they are found to fail.

An Indian from Hudson's Bay does well where he has been brought up, in the woods and swamps of the north; but must perish from want on the barren plains of the Columbia, where multitudes of inhabitants are never at a loss to find a livelihood: and the rule holds good if reversed. The temperature of the climate not being the same, the face of nature alters more or less in proportion. There the height of land is very distant from the ocean, the rivers in their course fall in with level countries, which form them into immense lakes; but from the great duration of the winter, the means of subsistence are scanty, and the natives are thereby scattered over a wide extent of country, familiarised with the trader, and have every dependence on him for the supply of their real or acquired wants.

On the waters of the Pacific the case is different; a chain of mountains extends its lofty ridges in the vicinity of the ocean. The inclination of the land is precipitous, and the course of the rivers direct. The heats are excessive, and they continue without a cloud or moistening shower, for months together, to replenish the source or feed their parched streams. Droughts check the salutary progress of vegetation. The winters are short, the waters abound with fish, the forests with animals, the plains with various nutritious herbs and roots, and the natives cover the earth in swarms in their rude and unenlightened state. War is their chief occupation, and the respective nations and tribes, in their wandering life, are no less independent of their trader than they are of one another.

The warlike nations of the Columbia move about in such unexpected multitudes as surprise the unwary trader, and their barbarous and forward appearance usually corresponds with their unrelenting fury. A sudden rencontre with them may well appal the stoutest heart. They are too free and indolent to submit to the drudgery of collecting the means of traffic. But articles of merchandise or use will not the less tempt their cupidity; and when such things are feebly guarded, they will not hesitate to take them by force. They are well or ill disposed towards their traders in measure as they supply them with the implements of war and withhold them from their enemies. It is, therefore, a nice point to pass from one tribe or nation to another, and make the most of each in the way of barter. Many are the obstacles to be overcome, nor is it given to ordinary minds to open new roads and secure a permanent trade.

It is not easy to change the force of habit, and no set of men could be more wedded to old customs than the great nabobs of the fur trade. And I might here, by way of confirming the remark, just point out one instance among many. The description of craft used on the waters of Columbia by the Astor Company consisted of split or sawed cedar-boats, strong, light, and durable, and in every possible way safer and better adapted to rough water than the birch-rind canoes in general use on the east side of the mountains. They carried a cargo or burden of about 3000 lbs. weight, and yet, nimbly handled, were easily carried across the portages. A great partiality existed in favour of the good old bark canoes of northern reputation; they being of prettier form, and, withal, the kind of vessel of customary conveyance used by north-westers; and that itself was no small recommendation. Therefore, the country was ransacked for prime birch bark more frequently than for prime furs; and to guard against a failure in this fanciful article, a stock of it was shipped at Montreal for London, and from thence conveyed round Cape Horn for their establishment at Fort George, in case that none of equal quality could be found on the waters of the Pacific!

On the arrival of the annual express we heard that some strenuous measures respecting the affairs of Columbia had been adopted at Fort William; that the eyes of the Company had at last been opened to their own interest, and that a change of system, after a warm discussion, was resolved upon. Such steps, of course, influenced, in a more or less degree, the decisions of our councils here, and gave rise to some equally warm debates, as will appear by-and-bye, about the practicability of carrying into effect the resolutions passed at head quarters.

The new plan settled upon for carrying on the trade west of the dividing ridge, so far as it went, embraced in its outline several important alterations. By this arrangement, the new Caledonia quarter, the most northern district of the Company's trade, instead of being supplied with goods, as formerly, from the east side, was in future to derive its annual supplies through the channel of the Columbia. And the Columbia itself, in lieu of being confined to the northern branch and sea coast as had been the case since the north-west had the trade, would be extended on the south and east, towards California and the mountains, embracing a new and unexplored tract of country. To obviate the necessity of establishing trading posts, or permanent dwellings, among so many warlike and refractory nations, formidable trapping parties were, under chosen leaders, to range the country for furs; and the resources thus to be collected were annually to be conveyed to the mouth of the Columbia, there to be shipped for the Canton market. To facilitate this part of the general plan, and give a new impulse to the measure, the Oregon was to be divided into two separate departments, designated by the coast and inland trade, with a chief man at the head of each.

Another object connected with this new arrangement was the introduction of Iroquois from Montreal. These people, being expert hunters and trappers, might, by their example, teach others. To the latter part of this plan, however, many objections might have been urged.

It will be in the recollection of the reader that we left the inland party preparing for head quarters. At the accustomed time we all met at the Forks, and from thence, following the current of the river, with our annual returns, we reached Fort George on the 7th of June, 1816.

## CHAPTER III.

Debates—New system—Indignity of the manager—Interior brigade—A man drowned—Singular fatality—American ship—Captain Reynolds—Doctor Downie—Suicide—The schooner—Jacob, the Russian mutineer—Deserters—A party in disguise—Jacob among the Indians—His designs—He is dressed in a squaw's garment—Warehouse robbery—Jacob and his Indian associates—Alarms at Fort George—Plan for seizing Jacob by force—Armed party—Indian guide—A rogue surprised—St. Martin wounded—Jacob's banishment—North-West Company—Outrages—Red River affray—The 19th of June—Criminal proceedings—General remarks—M'Kenzie's return to Columbia—M'Kenzie's reception—Growing difficulties—Two chiefs at issue—Reconciliation—The managing system—Bourgeois—Agents—Exclusive privilege—The bone of contention—Trapping expedition to the Wallamitte—Brush with the natives—Policy of the trappers—Failure of the expedition—Second trapping expedition—Three Indians shot—The expedition fails—Retreat of the whites—Remarks—Negotiation—Embassy to the Wallamitte—Armed party—Indian habits—Flag—Ceremony of smoking—Peace concluded—River Wallamitte—M'Kenzie at the Dalles—Indian mistake—Partiality for tobacco—Brigade stopped by ice—Policy of the whites—Indian hospitality—The banquet—Second disaster—A boat broken—Confidence not misplaced—Fidelity of Shy-law-iffs, an Indian chief—Spring operations—Increase of returns—Prospects brightening.

THE Fort William express brought some new and important resolutions, in addition to those we have noticed in the latter part of the preceding chapter. The first confirmed a division of the Columbia into two separate departments, and appointed the chief man or bourgeois to preside at the head of each. The second altered and amended the mode of conveying expresses; and the third dwelt on a new system to be introduced for the improvement of the trade generally, with some other points of minor importance.

As soon, therefore, as all parties had assembled at Fort George, the council was convened; but, instead of two or three days' sitting as usual, a whole week was spent in discussions without result: they had not the power either to alter or amend, and therefore they acquiesced in the minutes of council at head quarters.

The warm debates and protracted discussions in our council here, were not, however, occasioned alone by the introduction of the new system, nor by the division of Columbia into two departments, nor anything that had reference to the trade; but by a mere point of etiquette, arising out of one of the appointments.

After the sittings of council were over, and the new order of things promulgated, we hailed with no small joy the introduction of the new system, as opening a new and extensive field for energy and enterprise. But let me tell the reader that the little pronoun plural "we" is not intended to represent all hands, but merely those of my own class, the subordinates; for the bourgeois looked as sour as vinegar. Nor did it require any great penetration of mind to know the cause.

Mr. Keith, already noticed in our narrative, had been nominated to preside at the establishment of Fort George, and had the shipping interest, coast trade, and general outfitting business under his sole management. The gentleman appointed to superintend the department of the interior, was none other than the same Mr. M'Kenzie who had been one of the first adventurers to this part of the country, and who occupies so conspicuous a part in the first division of our narrative. To his share fell the arduous task of putting the whole machinery of the new system into operation.

Mr. Keith being one of themselves, his appointment gave no offence; but that a stranger, a man, to use their own words, "that was only fit to eat horse-flesh, and shoot at a mark," should have been put over their heads, was a slur on their reputation. So strongly had the tide of prejudice set against Mr. M'Kenzie, that Mr. Keith, although a man of sound judgment and good sense, joined in the clamour of his associates.

In connection with the new arrangement, the costly mode of conveying expresses throughout the country hitherto in vogue was to be abolished, and henceforth they were to be entrusted to the natives, with the exception of the annual general express. To give full effect to these measures, it was strongly recommended at head quarters that the council here should enter into the new order of things with heart and hand.

We now turn our attention to the annual brigade. The people bound for inland, consisting of one hundred and two persons, embarked on board of twelve boats, and left Fort George after a short stay of only fifteen days. The waters being but moderately high this year, and the weather very fine, no stoppage or casualty happened to retard their progress till they had reached the little rocky narrows below the falls, when there an accident unavoidably happened. While the men were engaged in hauling up one of the craft, the line broke, and the boat, instantly reeling round, filled with water close to the rocks. The foreman, taking advantage of his position, immediately jumped out and saved himself, and so might the steersman, had he been inclined; but under some strange infatuation, he kept standing in the boat, up to the middle in water, laughing all the time, making a jest of the accident, when suddenly a whirlpool bursting under the bottom, threw the craft on her side: it instantly filled and sunk, and poor Amiotte sunk along with it, to rise no more.

From the rocky narrows the different parties got to their respective destinations in safety. Having done so, we propose taking our leave of them for a little, and, in the meantime, return to Fort George, the place of my appointment as second to Mr. Keith.

The Company's ship, *Colonel Allan*, direct from London, reached the Columbia a few days after the arrival of the spring brigade from the interior; and soon after her, a schooner followed, from the same port, both heavily laden with ample cargoes for the trade of the country. It was pleasing to see the North-West as compared with Astor's vessels. The former brought us a full supply of everything required; whereas the latter, according to Astor's crooked policy, brought but little, and that little perfect trash; nor was half of what was brought left with us, he preferring to supply the Russians rather than his own people. The *Colonel Allan*, after a short stay at Fort George, sailed for California and South America on a speculating trip, and returned again with a considerable quantity of specie and other valuable commodities, consigned to some of the London merchants. This specie and cargo were stored at the establishment, and subjected us, for some months, to the annoyance of guarding it day and night. We often wished it in the owners' pockets, or in the river Styx.

During this summer Capt. M'Lellan, of the *Colonel Allan*, was employed in making out a new survey of the bar and entrance of the river, and I was appointed to accompany him; this business occupied us upwards of three weeks. On the bar several channels were found out in course of the examination; but as the sand-banks frequently shift, even in the course of a day or two, according to the prevailing winds, no permanent reliance could be placed on any of them. The old channel was considered the best. In August the *Colonel Allan* sailed for China, with the Columbia furs and specie.

Before taking our leave of this ship and her amiable commander, we have to record a fatal incident which took place on board, while she was lying at anchor in front of Fort George. It had often been a subject of remark among Columbians, how unfortunate a certain class of professional men had been in that quarter, physicians and surgeons. The first gentleman of this class in our time was a Doctor White; soon after entering the river, he became suddenly deranged, jumped overboard, and was drowned. The next, a Doctor Crowly, from Edinburgh, who came out to follow his profession on the Columbia, for the North-West Company, was, soon after his arrival, charged with having shot a man in cold blood, and, in consequence, sent home to stand his trial. This brings us to the circumstance we have referred to.

While the *Colonel Allan* was lying in port, an American ship, commanded by a Captain Reynolds, entered the river; it had no sooner cast anchor, than I was sent by Mr. Keith, according to the usual custom, to ascertain her object, and to hand Captain Reynolds a copy of the Company's regulations, for his information and guidance, respecting the natives and the trade; so that all things might be arranged in accordance with justice and good feelings between all parties.

While I was on board the Boston ship, Mr. Downie, surgeon of the *Colonel Allan*, in company with some other gentlemen, came on board, on a visit of pleasure. As soon as my little business with Captain Reynolds was over, he invited us all down to his cabin to taste what he called his "liquors." We went down, and were treated to a glass of New England whisky. On taking the bottle in his hand, Doctor Downie said, "Let us fill up our glasses; it will, perhaps, be the last." I and others took notice of the words, but no remark was made at the time, except by the captain, who smiled and said, "I hope not." After passing but a short time in the cabin, we all left the ship; I returning to the fort, while Doctor Downie and the others went to the *Colonel Allan*. Twenty minutes had not elapsed from the time we parted at the water's edge, when a message reached Fort George that Doctor Downie had committed suicide. As soon as the melancholy report reached us, Mr. Keith requested me to go on board the *Colonel Allan*, and attend the inquest. Accordingly, I went, and found Mr. Downie in a dying state. The moment he entered his cabin he had shot himself with a pistol. Being perfectly sensible at the time, I put a few questions to him; his only reply was, "Oh! my mother, my mother!" He soon breathed his last. No cause could be assigned for the rash act; he was a very sober man, beloved and respected by all who knew him. Mr. Downie was a near relation of the unfortunate captain of that name, who fell so gallantly on Lake Champlain.

Leaving the *Colonel Allan* to pursue her voyage, we resume the subject of the schooner which entered the Columbia, as already noticed. This vessel, after a cruise along the coast, sailed for the United States. On board of the schooner was a Russian renegade, by the name of Jacob, a blacksmith by trade, whom the captain, on his arrival, handed over to us in irons, charged with mutiny. This daring wretch had laid a plot for putting the captain to death, and carrying the ship to a strange port; but his designs were detected in time to save both.

We have no great pleasure in dwelling on crime, but will briefly sketch Jacob's career. He was brought to Fort George in irons, and in these irons he lay until the schooner sailed. On the strength of fair promises, however, and apparent deep contrition, he was released from his chains and confinement and introduced to the forge as a blacksmith. He did not long continue there before it was discovered that he had been trying his old pranks again; but though he did not succeed in bringing about a mutiny, he succeeded in causing disaffection and desertion.

It was always customary at Fort George to keep a watch by night as well as a guard by day. In this respect it resembled more a military than a trading establishment. Jacob, from his address, had got into favour with his bourgeois; he was one of the night-watch, and for some time gave great satisfaction. This conduct was, however, more plausible than real, and, from some suspicious circumstances I had noticed, I warned Mr. Keith that Jacob was not the reformed man that he wished to make us believe. But Mr. Keith, a good man himself, could only see Jacob's favourable side. The master was duped, and the blacksmith was at his old trade of plotting mischief. He was bribing and misleading the silly and credulous to form a party, and had so far succeeded that, while on the watch one dark night, he and eighteen of his deluded followers, chiefly Owhyhees, got over the palisades unperceived, and set off for California in a body! He had made his dupes believe that, if once there, their fortunes were made. But just as the last of the deserters was getting over the pickets, I happened to get wind of the matter, and discovered their design. I immediately awoke Mr. Keith, but it was only after muster was called that we found out the extent of the plot, and the number missing. "I could never have believed the villain would have done so," was Mr. Keith's only remark.

On the next morning the interpreter and five Indians, all in disguise, were sent to track them out, with instructions to join the fellows and to act according to circumstances. If they found them determined to continue their journey, they were not to make themselves known; but if, on the contrary, they found them wavering and divided, they were to use their influence and endeavour to bring them back. The plan succeeded. Abandoning their treacherous leader, the fugitive islanders wheeled about, and, accompanying the interpreter, returned again to the establishment on the third day. Jacob, finding himself caught in his own trap, and deserted in turn by those whom he had led astray, abandoned himself with the savages. Nor was he long with them when he gave us a specimen of his capabilities as a robber, as well as a mutineer and deserter, for he returned to the fort in the night-time, and contrived to get over the palisades, twenty feet high, eluded the watch, broke into a store, carried away his booty, and got clear off. Soon after this exploit, which in no small degree added to his audacity, he entered the fort in broad daylight, clothed in the garb of a squaw, and was meditating, in conjunction with some Indian desperadoes, an attack upon the fort, as we learned after his apprehension.

We had repeatedly sent him friendly messages to return to his duty, and promised him a free pardon for the past. In short, we had done everything to induce his return; but to no purpose; he thought the footing he had obtained among the Indians was sufficient to set all our invitations and threats at defiance.

During this time our anxiety and uneasiness increased, and the more so as it was well known that Jacob had become a leading man among a disaffected tribe of Indians. Our interest, our safety, our all, depended on our dissolving this dangerous union before it gathered strength. At this critical moment I proposed to Mr. Keith that if he would give me thirty men, I would deliver Jacob into his hands. "You shall have fifty," said he; but continuing the subject, he remarked again, "No; it will be a hazardous undertaking, and I have no wish to risk men's lives." "Better to run every risk," said I, "than to live in constant alarm." "Well then," said he, "take the men you want, and go;" so I immediately prepared to get hold of the villain at all risks.

For this purpose forty armed men were got ready, and having procured a guide, we left the fort in two boats by night; but soon left our boats and proceeded through the back woods, to prevent the Indians from either seeing or circulating any report of our departure. On the next day we had got to the edge of the woods about sundown: we encamped there, and remained concealed until night encouraged us to advance to within a short distance of the Indians. From this place I despatched the guide and two men to examine and report on the situation of the Indian camp. On their return a little after midnight, we put everything in the best order we could, both for the attack and to guard against surprise.

We had information as to the tent Jacob was in, and, of course, we kept our eyes on it. Our Indian guide became uneasy and much intimidated. He said it was madness to attempt taking him, as he was always armed, and besides that, the Indians would fire upon us. "Look," said I to him; "do you see our guns—are we not armed as well as they? All the Indians in the land will not prevent us from executing our purpose; but if you are afraid, you can return home." This declaration touched him keenly. "I am ready," said he, "to follow the whites; I am not afraid."

The night being dark, we should have waited the return of daylight; but the Indians were too numerous; our only chance of success was to take them by surprise. I therefore divided the men into two companies, one to surround the tent, the other to act as a guard in case the Indians interfered. All being ready, I took Wilson, the gunner, and St. Martin, the guide, two powerful men, with me. Arming ourselves, we made a simultaneous rush on the tent; but at the moment we reached it, a shot was fired from within, another instantly followed, yet we fortunately escaped. On forcing our way into the tent, the villain was in the act of seizing another gun, for he had three by him; but it was wrested out of his hands, and we laid hold of him: being a powerful man he managed to draw a knife, and making a dash at St. Martin, cut his arm severely; but he had not time to repeat the blow; we had him down, and tying his hands and feet, dragged him out. By this time all our people had mustered together, and in the darkness and bustle we appeared much more formidable than we really were.

In this confusion I perceived the chief of the rebellious tribe. Turning round to the fellow as he was sitting with his head on his knees, I said to him, "You are a pretty chief; harbouring an enemy to the whites—a dog like yourself." Dog or woman are the most insulting epithets you can apply to an Indian. "You dog," said I again to him, "who fired the shots? You have forfeited your life; but the whites, who are generous, forgive you. Look, therefore, well to your ways in future." A good impression might have been made, had we been more formidable and able to prolong our stay among them; but as the Indians might have recovered from their surprise, and seeing our weak side, been tempted to take advantage of it, we hastened from the camp, carrying our prize along with us.

After getting clear of the camp, we made a halt, hand-cuffed our prisoner, and then made the best of our way home. On arriving at the fort, Jacob was locked up, ironed, and kept so until the autumn, when he was shipped on board of a vessel sailing for the Sandwich Islands. As in irons he arrived, so in irons he left us. From that day, I never heard any more about Jacob.

It was a fortunate circumstance for us, that the Indians did not interfere with our attempt to take him. The fact is, they had no time to reflect, but were taken by surprise, which added to our success as well as safety.

On Jacob's embarking in the boat to be conveyed to the ship, he took off his old Russian cap, and waving it in the air round his head, gave three loud cheers, uttering in a bold voice, "Huzza, huzza! for my friends; confusion to my enemies!"

While we were thus occupied on the west side of the mountains, new and more deeply-interesting scenes were exerting their influence on the east side, which we shall notice.

The North-West Company were "encroaching on the chartered territories of the Hudson's Bay Company." The north-westers, high in their own estimation, professed to despise all others, and threatened with lawless violence all persons who presumed, in the ordinary course of trade, to come within their line—a line without limits, which fancy or caprice induced them to draw between themselves and all others. Many needy adventurers from time to time sought their way into the Indian countries from Canada; but few, very few indeed, ever had the courage or good fortune, if good fortune we might call it, to pass Fort William; and if, in a dark night or misty morning, they had passed the forbidden barrier, vengeance soon overtook them. Their canoes were destroyed, themselves threatened, and their progress impeded in every way, so that they had to return ruined men.

It is well known that the North-West Company had no exclusive right of trade to any portion of the Indian country. Their right was in common with every other adventurer, and no more. And yet these were the men who presumed to burst through the legal and sacred rights of others. Many actions, however, which carried guilt and crime along with them, were thrown upon the shoulders of the North-West Company undeservedly. Many lawless acts and aggressions were committed by their servants, which that highly respectable body never sanctioned. It was the unfortunate spirit of the times—one of the great evils resulting from competition in trade, in a country where human folly and individual tyranny among the subordinates often destroys the wisest measures of their superiors. For at the head of the company of which we are now speaking were men of great sterling worth; men who detested crime as much as they loved justice.

The north-westers had of late years penetrated through the very heart of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories as far as the Atlantic, which washes the shores of Hudson's Bay, and set at defiance every legal restraint or moral obligation. Their servants pillaged their opponents, destroyed their forts and trading establishments as suited their views, and not unfrequently kept armed parties marauding from post to post, menacing with destruction and death every one that presumed to check their career, till, at last, party spirit and rivalry in trade had changed the whole social order of things, and brought about a state of open hostility. Such was the complexion of affairs up to the fatal 19th of June of this year.

On that memorable day, one of those armed parties to which we have just alluded, consisting of forty-five men, had advanced on the Earl of Selkirk's infant colony at Red River; when Governor Semple of the Hudson's Bay Company, with several other gentlemen and attendants, went out on behalf of the frightened colonists, to meet them, with the view, it has been stated, of ascertaining what they wanted. But the moment both parties met, angry words ensued, shots were fired, and in the unfortunate rencontre the Governor and his party, to the number of twenty-two, were all killed on the spot. The colonists were driven, at the muzzle of the gun, from their comfortable homes to a distance of 300 miles from the settlement; even to Norway House, at the north end of Lake Winipeg.

And if they had the good fortune to get off with their lives, it was owing to the humane feelings of Mr. Cuthbert Grant, a native of the soil, who, placing himself, at the risk of his own life, between the north-west party and the settlers, kept the former at bay by his daring and determined conduct, and saved the latter; for which meritorious and timely interference the settlement owes him a debt of gratitude which it can never repay.

On the words, "shots were fired"—hinged many of the decisions which took place in the courts of law; for the advocates of either party strenuously denied having fired the first shot. Perhaps the knowledge of that fact will ever remain a secret; but the general opinion is against the north-west party, and in that opinion I concur.

The triumph, however, was but of short duration; for the sacrifice of that day sealed the downfall of the North-West Company. No less than 23 individuals out of the 45 which composed the north-west party, fell victims, in the course of human events, to misfortune, or came to an untimely end. A melancholy warning!

We might here remark, in connection with this sad event, that the going out of Governor Semple and so many men with him was an ill-advised measure, as it carried along with it the appearance of a determination on their part to oppose force to force; and we cannot, in the spirit of impartiality and fairness, close our eyes to the fact, that they were all armed: this was, no doubt, the light in which the north-west party viewed their approach, which led to the catastrophe that followed.

But we now hasten from this scene to notice the influence that it had on their opponents. No sooner had the news of the fatal disaster at Red River spread abroad, than the Earl of Selkirk, with an armed force, seized on Fort William, the grand depôt and head quarters of the North-West Company, on the east side of the Rocky Mountains. We are not, however, prepared to assert that Lord Selkirk was right in seizing on Fort William by way of retaliation. No one has a right to take the law into his own hands, nor to make himself judge in his own cause; but according to the prevailing customs of this lawless country, power confers right. Soon after these aggressions, the eyes of Government were opened to the facts of the case; and two commissioners, Colonel Coltman and Major Fletcher, were sent up from Canada with authority to examine into the matter and seize all guilty or suspected persons belonging to either side, and send them down to stand their trials. We cannot do better here than refer our readers to a perusal of these trials, which took place in Canada, in 1818.

Before dismissing this part of our narrative, we will advert to what we have just mentioned, namely, "The Earl of Selkirk's infant colony." As it may afford some satisfaction to our readers to know something more about it, we shall, for their information, state a few facts. In the progress of his colonising system, Lord Selkirk had purchased from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1811, a tract of land on the Red River, situated at the southern extremity of Lake Winipeg, in Hudson's Bay, for the purpose of planting a colony there; to which place several families had, in 1812 and subsequent years, been brought out from Scotland by his lordship. These Scotch families were the first settlers in Red River, and Red River was the first colony planted in Rupert's land.

The first settlers had to stand the brunt of troublesome times, and weather the sweeping storms of adversity during the early days of the colony. They were driven several times from their homes, and suffered every hardship, privation, and danger, from the lawless strife of the country. They were forced to live and seek shelter among the savages, and, like them, had to resort to hunting and fishing to satisfy the pangs of hunger; and after order had in some measure been established, they were visited for several years by clouds of grasshoppers, that ate up every green herb, and left the fields black, desolate, and fruitless.

What his lordship's views were, in planting a colony in such a frozen and out-of-the-way corner of the earth as Red River, few persons knew. He must have foreseen, that it must eventually fall into the hands of the Americans, however little they might benefit by it; for the march of improvement must, in the nature of things, be south, and not north. Its value, therefore, to Great Britain, excepting so far as the Hudson's Bay Company are concerned, will be nothing; but from its geographical position, it may on some future occasion serve as a bone of contention between the two Governments. The founder of Red River colony could have had no other real object in view, than as a key to the fur trade of the far west, and as a resting-place for retiring fur traders clogged with Indian families. In this point of view, the object was philanthropic, and, to the fur trade, a subject of real interest; for retiring traders, in lieu of transporting either themselves or their means to the civilised world, as was the case formerly, would find it their interest to spend their days, in perhaps a more congenial and profitable manner, in Red River colony, under the fostering care and paternal influence of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company.

We have already adverted to M'Kenzie's appointment. In October, that gentleman reached Fort George from Montreal, to enter on his new sphere of labours. He was received by the Columbia managers with a chilling and studied politeness. It was, no doubt, mortifying to his feelings to witness the shyness of his new associates; for if they could have driven him back from whence he came, it was evidently their object to do so;

but M'Kenzie, as stubborn as themselves, knew his ground, and defied the discouraging reception he met with, either to damp his spirits or to cool his steady zeal. He therefore lost no time, but intimated to Mr. Keith his wish to depart for the interior as soon as convenient, the season being far advanced and the journey long.

Mr. Keith, however, raised many objections. He alleged the scarcity of men, the lateness of the season, and the want of craft. Nor were these objections altogether groundless. "Your departure," said he, "will disarrange all our plans for the year." In answer to which, M'Kenzie handed him his instructions, a letter from the agents at Montreal, with a copy of the Minutes of Council at Fort William. After perusing these documents, Mr. Keith, throwing them on the table, said, "Your plans are wild: you never will succeed; nor do I think any gentleman here will second your views, or be so foolhardy as to attempt an establishment on the Nez Percés lands as a key to your future operations; and without this you cannot move a step." "These remarks are uncalled for: I have been there already," replied M'Kenzie. "Give me the men and goods I require, according to the resolutions of council: I alone am answerable for the rest." So saying, they parted.

During all this time the north-westers might be seen together in close consultation, avoiding, as much as possible, the object of their dislike.

Their shy and evasive conduct at length roused M'Kenzie to insist on his right. "Give me the men and goods," said he, "as settled at head quarters. I ask for no more; those I must have." "You had better," replied Mr. Keith, "postpone your operations till another year." "No," rejoined M'Kenzie, "my instructions are positive, I must proceed at once." And here the conference again ended.

Keith and his adherents had denounced every change as pregnant with evil, and M'Kenzie's schemes as full of folly and madness; they therefore laboured hard to counteract both. The chief of the interior stood alone, I being the only person on the ground who seconded his views, and that was but a feeble support. Yet, although he thus stood alone, he never lost sight of the main object. The coolness between the parties increased; they seldom met; the wordy dispute ended, a paper war ensued. This new feature in the affair was not likely to mend the matter, but was what M'Kenzie liked; he was now in his own element. This went on for two or three days, and all anxiously awaited the result. The characters of the men were well known; both firm, both resolute.

At this stage of the contest, M'Kenzie called me into his room one day and showed me the correspondence between them. "You see," said he to me, after I had perused the notes, "that in war, as in love, the parties must meet to put an end to it." "I cannot see it in that light yet," said I; "but I can see that the wisest of men are not always wise. Delay is his object; you must curtail your demands, and yield to circumstances. You do not know Mr. Keith; he does everything by rule, and will hazard nothing; you, on the contrary, must hazard everything. In working against you, they are working against themselves, and must soon see their error. It is the result of party spirit: Mr. Keith has been led astray by the zeal of his associates; left to himself, he is a good man, and there is yet ample room for a friendly reconciliation."

Just as we were talking over these matters, a note from Mr. Keith was handed into the room. This note was written in a plain, business-like manner, and distinctly stated what assistance M'Kenzie could obtain. After reading it over, and throwing it down on the table among the other diplomatic scraps, M'Kenzie observed to me, "It is far short of what I require, far short of what I expected, and far short of what the company guaranteed; yet it is coming nearer to the point, and is, perhaps, under all circumstances, as much as can be expected. It is a choice of two evils, and rather than prolong a fruitless discussion, I will attempt the task before me with such means as are available: if a failure is the result, it will not be difficult to trace it to the proper source." Soon after this the parties met and entered upon business in a friendly manner.

M'Kenzie now prepared for his inland voyage: and had the reader seen the medley of savages, Iroquois, Abanakees, and Owhyhees, that were meted out to him, he would at once have marked the brigade down as doomed. But that was not all; a question arose, according to the rules of the voyage, who was to be his second? and this gave rise to another serious difficulty. One said the undertaking was too hazardous ever to succeed, he would not go; another, that it was madness to attempt it, and he would not go; and a third observed, that as he had not been appointed by the council, he would not go; so M'Kenzie was left to go alone!

Never, during my day, had a person for the interior left Fort George with such a motley crew, nor under such discouraging circumstances. And, certainly, under all the difficulties of the case, M'Kenzie would have been justified in waiting until he had been better fitted out, or provided with means adequate to the undertaking. Disregarding all dangers, his experience and zeal buoyed him up, and ultimately carried him through, in spite of all the obstacles that either prejudice or opposition could throw in his way.

Although M'Kenzie's personal absence was pleasing to his colleagues, yet, in another point of view, it was extremely mortifying, because they had failed in their object, either to discourage or stop him. Measuring, however, his capacity by their own, they still cherished a hope that the Indians would arrest his progress; his failure was therefore looked upon as certain.

Let us inquire how it happened that a man "only fit to eat horse flesh, and shoot at a mark," should have been put over the heads of the Columbia managers. Incomprehensible as it was to them, it was perfectly clear to us. In the first place, the trade of the Columbia, under their guidance, had not advanced one single step beyond what it was when they first took possession of it: nay, it was even worse; which a very superficial glance at affairs would demonstrate beyond a doubt.

According to the articles of co-partnership, the shares of the stock in trade were divided into two parts. The directors, or, as they were more generally called, "agents," held a certain proportion in their own hands, as stock-holders and general managers of the business; the bourgeois, as they were called, or the active managers among the Indians, held the remaining shares. By the regulations of the Company, the bourgeois were always raised, either through favour or merit, from the ranks, or, step by step, to the more honourable and lucrative station of proprietors. Their patronage in turn promoted others; their votes decided the election, for or against all candidates; and this was generally the manner in which the business of promotion was carried on in the north west trade.

But the agents were on a somewhat different footing; for they had not only a voice in common with the bourgeois in all cases of promotion, but they had what, perhaps, we might call an exclusive right as agents, according to the interest they held, of sending into the country any person or persons they thought proper, or who possessed their confidence, whether connected with the company or not. Such persons, however, entered the service on fixed salaries, without the prospect of promotion; because, to have a claim to promotion in the regular way, an apprenticeship was indispensable.

To the agents, therefore, our friend was known; his enterprise and general experience gave them every hope; and to him, in preference to any other, they confided the difficult task of recovering the Columbia trade, and of carrying into effect the new system. Five hundred pounds a-year for five years, secured him to their interest, and on these conditions he returned again to the Columbia.

As soon as the brigade started for the interior, a party of ten men were outfitted for the purpose of trapping beaver in the Wallamitte. On their way up to the place, they were warned by the natives not to continue, for that they would not suffer them to hunt on their lands, unless they produced an instant payment by way of tribute. This the hunters were neither prepared for nor disposed to grant; and they had the simplicity to imagine that the Indians would not venture to carry their threats into effect. The next day, however, as they were advancing on their voyage, they were astonished at seeing the banks of the river lined on both sides by the natives, who had stationed themselves in menacing postures behind the trees and bushes. The north-westers were little acquainted with these people, and thinking they only meant to frighten them out of some articles of goods, they paddled up in the middle of the stream. A shower of arrows, however, very soon convinced them of their mistake. One of the number was wounded; and in drifting down, for they immediately turned about, they fired a round upon the natives, one of whom was killed.

After this discomfiture the hunters made the best of their way back to the establishment; and the project of hunting in the Wallamitte was relinquished for a time. Soon afterwards, however, a party of 25 men, under the management of a clerk, was sent to pacify the natives, and to endeavour to penetrate to the hunting-ground. On reaching the spot where the first difficulty arose, they found that the man who had been killed was a chief, and that, therefore, the tribe would not come to terms before a certain portion of merchandise was delivered as a compensation for the injury done. This being accordingly agreed to, the matter was com-promised, and the party advanced; but unfortunately soon got involved in a second quarrel with the natives, and having fired upon them, killed three.

On their way back, after putting up for the night, a band of Indians got into their camp, and a scuffle ensued, when one of the hunters was severely wounded, and the whole party owed its safety to the darkness of the night. By the disasters of this trip, every avenue was for the present shut up against our hunters in the Wallamitte.

One remark here suggests itself. When the first party of hunters were warned by the natives that "they would not suffer them to hunt on their lands, unless they produced an instant payment by way of tribute," what was the amount of that tribute? Had they, the moment the Indians threatened tribute, instead of paddling up in the middle of the stream, stopped and made for shore, held out the hand of friendship and smoked a pipe or two of tobacco with them, there would have been an end to all demands—the affair would have been settled. This was the tribute the natives expected; but the whites set the Indians at defiance by trying to pass them in the middle of the stream.

When any difficulty of this kind occurs, a friendly confidence on the part of the whites seldom fails in bringing about a reconciliation: the Indians at once come round to their views. This was the universal practice followed by us during our first years in travelling among the Indians, and we always got on smoothly. But in measuring the feelings of the rude and independent natives of Columbia by the same standard as they measured the feelings of their dependent slaves on the east side of the mountains, the north-westers were not wise.

The result of this disaster shut us out entirely from the southern quarter. The loss was severely felt; and Mr. Keith, with his usual sagacity and forethought, lost no time in applying a remedy. But what remedy could well be applied? We considered ourselves aggrieved, the natives were still more angry; we had been wounded, but they had been killed; and perhaps all by the bad conduct of our own people; yet, under all the circumstances, something required to be done. Negotiation was resolved upon as the most prudent step to be adopted.

In order, therefore, to bring about a reconciliation, a party sufficiently strong to guard against miscarriage and give weight to our measures, was fitted out and put under my charge; and I was ably assisted by my experienced friend Mr. Ogden. This half-diplomatic, half-military embassy, consisting of 45 armed men, left Fort George in three boats, and reached the Wallamitte falls on the third day. It was there the Indians had assembled to resist any attempt of the hunters to ascend the

Wallamitte. There we found them encamped on the left or west bank. We took up our position, with two field-pieces to guard our camp, on the east or right-hand side, which is low, rocky, and somewhat uneven. Both parties were opposite to each other, with the river between them. Early the next morning, we set the negotiation on foot, and made several attempts, but in vain, to bring the Indians to a parley. I went to their camp; we offered them to smoke, and held out the hand of friendship in every possible way we could; but to no purpose. They refused holding any communication with us; but continued to sing their war-songs, and danced their war-dance. We, however, were not to be discouraged by any demonstrations on their part.

Patience and forbearance do much on these occasions. It is the best policy to be observed with Indians; indeed with all the natives of Columbia. Peace being our object, peace we were determined to obtain. We, therefore, quietly waited to see what time would bring about.

The first day passed without our effecting anything, and so did the second; friendly offers were constantly held out to them, but as constantly rejected. On the third day, however, the chiefs and warriors crossed over to our side, and stood in a group at some distance from our camp. I knew what was meant by this; so I took a flag in my hand, and went alone to meet them. Just as I had reached the party, the whole Indian camp burst into a loud and clamorous scene of mourning. That moment the chiefs and warriors, forming a ring, squatted down, and concealing their faces with their garments, remained silent and motionless for about the space of half an hour. During all this time I had to stand patiently and await the result. Not a word was uttered on either side; but as soon as the lamentations ceased in the camp, the great men, uncovering their faces, stood upon their feet. I then offered the pipe of peace, according to Indian custom; but a significant shake of the head from the principal chief was the only reply.

After a momentary pause, the chief turning to me exclaimed in his own language, "What do the whites want?" Rather nettled at his refusing the pipe, I answered, "Peace—peace is what we want;" and in saying so, I presented him with my flag. "Here," said I; "the great chief of the whites sends you that as a token of his love." A moment or two passed in silence; a whisper went round; the peace-offering was accepted, and in return, the chief took a pipe painted and ornamented with feathers, and laid it down before me. This was a favourable sign. On such occasions, the calumet of peace is always an emblem of friendship. They were gratified with the toy; it pleased them. The chief asked to smoke. I then handed him the pipe he had but a little before refused, and some tobacco, and they sat down and commenced smoking; for that is the introductory step to all important affairs, and no business can be entered upon with these people before the ceremony of smoking is over.

The smoking ended, each great man got up in turn and made a speech; before they had all got through, nearly two hours elapsed, and all that time I had to stand and wait. These speeches set forth, in strong language, a statement of their grievances, a demand for redress, and a determination to resist in future the whites from proceeding up the Wallamitte. As soon as the Indians had said all they had to say on the subject, they sat down.

After arriving at our camp and smoking there, I stated the case on behalf of the whites; opposing the Indians' determination to prevent us from ascending the Wallamitte, and trying to bring about, if possible, a peace. I, therefore, endeavoured to meet every objection, and proved to the chiefs that their people were the first aggressors, by shooting their arrows at our people; but this being no part of Indian law, they either could not, or would not, comprehend it. Notwithstanding their people had been the aggressors in the first instance, our people had been guilty of great indiscretion; and to cut the matter short, I agreed to pay for their dead according to their own laws, if they would yield the other points; which, after a whole day's negotiation, and two or three trips to their camp, they at last agreed to. The chiefs reasoned the matter temperately, and formally agreed to everything. But their acknowledged authority is very limited; their power, as chiefs, small; so that any rascal in the camp might at any time break through the most solemn treaty with impunity.

The conditions of this rude treaty were, that the Wallamitte should remain open; that the whites should have at all times free ingress and egress to that quarter unmolested; that in the event of any misunderstanding between the natives and the whites, the Indians were not to resort to any act of violence, but their chiefs were to apply for redress to the white chief at Fort George. And if the whites found themselves aggrieved, they were also not to take the law into their own hands, nor to take any undue advantage of the Indians. The chiefs alone were to be accountable for the conduct of their people. And truth compels us to acknowledge that the Indians faithfully and zealously observed their part of the treaty for many years afterwards.

The business being ended, the chief, as a token of general consent, scraped a little dust together, and with his hand throwing it in the air, uttered, at the same time, the expressive word "Hilow," it is done. This was no sooner over than the chief man presented us with a slave, as a token of his good will, signifying by the act that if the Indians did not keep their promise we might treat them all as slaves. The slave being returned again to the chief, we prepared to leave the Indians; paid our offering for the dead, shook hands with the living, satisfied the chiefs, and pushed down the current.

On our way home, however, we were stopped about an hour at Oak Point by the ice, a rather unusual circumstance, one that never occurred either before or after, all the time I was in the country. On reaching Fort George, the articles of the treaty were read over, and drew from Mr. Keith, a smile of approbation; that was no small credit to me, for he was a very cautious man, and not lavish of his praise. "Your success," said he to me, "removes my anxiety, and is calculated not only to restore peace in the Wallamitte, but throughout the whole of the neighbouring tribes."

We might here state that the Wallamitte takes its rise near the northern frontiers of California in about lat. 43° 30′ north, not far from the Umpqua river. The former of these streams runs almost a northern course, and empties its waters into the Columbia by two channels, some seventy miles above Cape Disappointment, in north lat. 46° 19′, being almost due east from the mouth of Columbia; the latter pursues a course almost due west, till it reaches the ocean. The Call-law-poh-yea-as is the name by which all the Wallamitte tribes, sixteen in number, are generally known. These people were always considered by the whites as a quiet and inoffensive nation, dull and unassuming in their behaviour, but, when once roused, not deficient in courage.

We have more than once had occasion to notice the striking change in the natives during the reign of the north-west company on the Columbia. On his passage down, M'Kenzie was greeted at the Dalles by an unexpected shower of stones, as he took the current at the lower end of the portage. The natives in this instance were a few hundreds strong; his party consisted of about forty, and, judging it expedient to resent the very first insult, he briskly wheeled round, to their astonishment, and ordered all arms to be presented. In this menacing attitude he signified to his men to rest, until he showed the example by firing the first shot; then, exhorting the natives to renew their insult with stones, or resort to their arms, a fair challenge was offered. But, whether the movement was too sudden, or that they were doubtful of the result, they declined, and came forward with a satisfactory submission: the affair of the rifle, on a former occasion, was not, perhaps, forgotten. The attack was owing to the scarcity of tobacco. A very few pipes had been lighted, and they perceiving that he had little remaining, became enraged because they could not grasp the whole. A few days previous, M'Millan having gone down with an express, with only twenty men, they robbed one of his people of his coat, and others of various articles, at the moment of embarking; but this gentleman observed a very prudent forbearance, his party being in no way a match for them.

M'Kenzie's departure from Fort George has already been noticed. Without accident or loss of time he reached the dangerous pass of the Cascades. There, however, the rigours of the season checked his progress; for the Columbia was bridged over with ice.

We soon learned, however, that he was at home. His party consisted of about forty men, such as they were; retaining, therefore, a certain number about himself and the property, he adopted a new plan of distributing the remainder in the houses of the different great men among the natives, apparently as boarders, but in reality as spies; so that every hour he had ample intelligence of all that passed in the respective villages or camps. The chiefs were flattered by this mark of his consideration; they were no less pleased with the trifles which from time to time they received in payment, and all the natives of the place became, in a few months, perfectly familiarised with the whites.

A great deal of information was collected from these people, considerable furs also, and altogether such a footing established among them as promised to be turned to advantage at a future time. The chiefs were no less pleased to see M'Kenzie than anxious to know the cause of his return to their country. And he was greeted with a hearty welcome from all classes.

"We are rejoiced," said an old chief to him, one day, "to see one of our first and best friends come back again to live among us. We were always well treated by our first traders, and got plenty of tobacco to smoke. They never passed our camp without taking our children by the hand, and giving us a smoke, and we have always been sorry since you left us. Our traders now-a-days use us badly; they pass up and down the river without stopping. They never take our children by the hand, nor hold out the pipe to us. They do not like us. Their hearts are bad. We seldom go to see them. Are you," continued the chief, "going to remain long with us?" M'Kenzie consoled the friendly old man, and told him that he would be long with them, to smoke and take their children by the hand, and would never pass nor repass without giving them a smoke, as usual. At these words, the chief exclaimed, "Haugh owe yea ah! Haugh owe yea ah!" These exclamations of gratitude showed that M'Kenzie was perfectly at home among them. Every countenance he met smiled with contentment, and his authority was as much respected by the Indians as by his own people, so that he considered himself as safe and secure in the Indian camp as if he had been in his own house.

No sooner had he laid himself up in ordinary among the great nabobs of the Cascades, than he was invited from wigwam to wigwam to partake of their hospitality.

On the score of cheer, we will here gratify the curiosity of our readers with a brief description of one of their entertainments, called an Indian feast. The first thing that attracts the attention of a stranger, on being invited to a feast in these parts, is, to see seven or eight bustling squaws running to and fro with pieces of greasy bark, skins of animals, and old mats, to furnish the banqueting lodge, as receptacles for the delicate viands: at the door of the lodge is placed, on such occasions, a sturdy savage with a club in his hand, to keep the dogs at bay, while the preparations are going on.

The banqueting hall is always of a size suitable to the occasion, large and roomy. A fire occupies the centre, round which, in circular order, are laid the eatables. The guests form a close ring round the whole. Every one approaches with a grave and solemn step. The party being all assembled, the reader may picture to himself our friend seated among the nobles of the place, his bark platter between his legs, filled top-heavy with the most delicious *mélange* of bear's grease, dog's flesh, wappatoes, obellies, amutes, and a profusion of other viands, roots, and berries. Round the festive board, placed on *terra firma*, all the nabobs of the place are squatted down in a circle, each helping himself out of his platter with his fingers, observing every now and then to sleek down the hair by way of wiping the hands. Only one knife is used, and that is handed round from one to another in quick motion. Behind the banqueting circle sit, in anxious expectation, groups of the canine tribe, yawning, howling, and growling; these can only be kept in the rear by a stout cudgel, which each of the guests keeps by him, for the purpose of self-defence; yet it not unfrequently happens that some one of the more daring curs gets out of patience, breaks through the front rank, and carries off his booty; but when a trespass of this kind is committed, the unfortunate offender is well belaboured in his retreat, for the cudgels come down upon him with a terrible vengeance. The poor dog, however, has his revenge in turn, for the squabble and brawl that ensues disturbs all the dormant fleas of the domicile. This troop of black assailants jump about in all directions, so that a guest, by helping himself to the good things before him, keeping the dogs at bay behind him, and defending himself from the black squadrons that surround him, pays, perhaps, dearer for his entertainment at the Columbian Cascades than a foreign ambassador does in a London hotel!

On the breaking up of the ice our friends were again on their voyage; but had again the misfortune to break one of their boats while towing it up the Cascades. The lading consisted of sixty packages, of ninety pounds each; and the other craft were too much laden to embark so great a surplus: so, strange as it may appear, M'Kenzie lost not an hour in hastening his voyage, but delivered over the whole of this valuable and bulky cargo into the hands of a chief, named Shy-law-ifs, until the period of his return. When the brigade returned, the faithful and trusty chief delivered the whole over, safe and untouched, to M'Kenzie again, after being six months in his possession! Nor did we ever learn that the Indians, or even his own relations, molested him in the least, during this seasonable act of friendship.

During this voyage the chief of the interior visited several of the inland posts, arranged the plans for the ensuing year, and then joined the people of the spring brigade, who were assembling from all quarters. This party we had left, as will be remembered, on reaching their winter quarters, and we now resume the subject, in order to conduct them to their friends at head quarters.

In the Indian countries, no sooner has the rigorous season begun to break up than the people of each wintering ground leave their respective stations, and repair with all possible speed to the general rendezvous at head quarters. The mode of voyaging at that particular period varies according to the temperature of the climate, the face of the country, and the peculiar habits of the tribes where the station has been fixed; whether in the vicinity of lofty mountains or of level plains, and whether the inhabitants live at peace or war with each other, or endanger their traders by their early sallies in the spring. From some parts, therefore, the people carry their returns in canoes. In others, the use of horses, or sledges drawn by dogs, is resorted to, as the most practicable for transporting property during the early stages of the season.

The time had now come when, with lightsome hearts, the winterers, as they are generally called, perform the annual trip to the ocean; and an augmentation of returns this year brightened the features of our friends as they came down the Columbia to Fort George, where they arrived safely on the 16th of June, 1817. Happy we were, likewise, that a twelvemonth had elapsed, for the first time throughout the interior, without casualty or bloodshed to thin their numbers.

## CHAPTER IV.

Ship from England—Head Quarters—Council—Reform counteracted—Shipping—Owhyhees—Difficulties—Brigade leave Fort George—Remarks—Wallamitte—Whites menaced—Arrows pointed—Guns presented—Iroquois—Cascades—Indians numerous—Difficulties—Act of friendship—Tobacco treat—Little dog—Affray—Hostile appearances—An Indian and his gun—Indian trickery—Peace offering—Cautious measures—Fatigue of the party—Mode of encamping—Measures of defence—Portage regulations—Long narrows—Hostile appearances—Expedients—Tribute—The feathered herald rebuked—Portage—Indians muster strong—Confusion—Critical situation of the whites—Conjectures—The three desperadoes—M'Kenzie—Departure from the narrows—Tobacco offering—Old system—Old habits—Spokane house—Pleasures of the wilderness—Spokane house *versus* Walla Walla—General remarks—A dead man alive—Anecdote.

A FEW days after the arrival of the spring brigade from the interior, the company's annual ship reached Fort George, and with its arrival we shall commence the transactions of another year.

On the arrival of all hands at head quarters, their stay is generally short; consequently, at the head depôt, all is bustle and hurry; yet business of every description is transacted there, with a degree of order and regularity not to be surpassed in countries more civilised. As soon, therefore, as the arrangements at the depôt terminate, and the annual appointment is made—for it is there unalterably fixed for the year, without any appeal—each man returns to his post. But although the authority which determines the lot of each for the season is absolute, yet few instances of either oppression or injustice occur.

During the sitting of council this year, an inclination was manifested to promote, by every possible means, a change of system, and, by so doing, to give the chief of the interior the benefit resulting from general support; but after the council broke up, the disposition evinced to carry such a measure into practical operation rather operated in an opposite direction, tending to defeat any change for the better; and this disposition was strengthened by new and unforeseen difficulties, over which the Columbians had no control.

In the various arrangements from year to year there is generally contentment and satisfaction among all classes. This arises as much from that variety of scene, that love of freedom of which man is so universally fond, and which he here so fully enjoys, as from anything else. There are pleasures at times in wild and savage countries as alluring as those in gay cities and polished circles; and on the whole, few ever leave the scenes of the wilderness without deep regret.

In consequence of the East India Company's debarring the bulk of British subjects from sailing in the Indian Ocean, the North-West Company's commerce in that quarter of the world became extremely circumscribed. Therefore, they resolved to divest themselves of all their shipping, as, through the connections they possessed in New England, the inconvenience would be compensated by their investing their furs in China produce, and their trade would not sustain any material injury. We shall therefore not trouble ourselves, nor our readers, about the shipping interest, but confine our remarks to those measures which affected us nearer home.

The spirit of rivalry and opposition in trade east of the mountains, had for some time checked the progress of the North-West Company, and intercepted the reinforcements of men which had been despatched to the Columbia quarter. On this account we found ourselves short of our usual complement, and therefore had, at a great expense and loss of time, to send for a supply of Sandwich Islanders as substitutes.

But even this difficulty and delay might have been avoided, had there been anything like willingness among ourselves to assist each other; for there might have been not a few men collected from other sources to strengthen our ranks in the emergency; but no one was disposed to spare a man, or lend a willing hand, to assist in bringing about a new order of things. Old habits and a love of ease predominated. The chief of the interior had therefore to depart with a motley and disaffected handful of men, chiefly Iroquois, to prosecute the introductory part of his reform plan.

Matters having been arranged, the inland brigade, after a short stay of eight days, left the head depôt for the interior. I also accompanied the party for my own post at the She-whaps; and the change was the more agreeable to me, as any place was to be preferred to the wet and disagreeable climate of Fort George.

It was not my intention, originally, to have conducted, step by step, every voyaging party ascending or descending the Columbia; yet, as I promised to notice every incident that might occur, and, moreover, to narrate the subject of my own trials and hair-breadth escapes among the Indians, that duty has again devolved on me; and as it will be found that we had more than ordinary difficulties to contend with during the present voyage, the reader may, perhaps, take some interest in its details.

On the brigade's starting, the numbers were only forty-five men, being little more than half the usual complement. We felt our own weakness, and the more so at that season when the communication is resorted to by strange Indians, it being the great rendezvous for salmon fishing: but we had no alternative; few as our numbers were, we had to face the difficulties that lay before us, so we hoisted sail and turned our backs on Fort George.

At Oak Point one of our men deserted, and soon afterwards two others fell sick, diminishing our numbers and embarrassing us still more. At the mouth of the Wallamitte we were nearly getting into a serious quarrel. We had made a halt to purchase some provisions from the Indians on Moltnomah Island; while in the act of doing so, some arrows were pointed our way without any apparent cause, when two of the Iroquois immediately cocked their guns to fire upon the Indians; they were fortunately stopped in time, or we might have had a sad tale to tell, for one shot fired from any of our party would have been the signal of our ruin. Notwithstanding the Iroquois were checked in time, yet the menace was noticed by the Indians, and it raised a spirit of discontent which ran like wildfire among them; and our diminished numbers, compared to those of former years, encouraged the Indians to a boldness scarcely ever witnessed before. At this stage of the affair the natives were observed to collect in groups, and to become shy towards us—a very bad sign; we, however, put the best face on things, and tried to restore confidence and content, after which we set sail and left them.

Arriving at the Cascades, we found the natives in great numbers, and all completely armed. The utmost care and circumspection were needful in carrying our bulky ladings over that rocky and dangerous portage; and although strong guards were stationed at the frequent resting-places, yet we could not manage to get through without repeated alarms. However, the good understanding we kept up with the principal men quieted all our apprehensions; and in spite of appearances, it was found that we were in reality safe during the whole of our arduous day's labour.

Having encamped on a convenient spot at the upper end, the chiefs and great men were invited to come and smoke with us; they accepted the invitation, and their suite of followers might have been five hundred. As soon as the order of the camp was finished, and the proper precautions taken for the night, the chiefs were admitted within the lines, and made to sit down at a convenient place set apart for that purpose by the doors of the tents, while the crowd received the same indulgence at some distance on the opposite side.

When the ceremony of smoking was over, a few words were addressed to the chiefs, expressing the favourable sense we entertained of their character and their deportment during the day. We also bestowed on each a head of tobacco, and to every one of the group we gave a single leaf, which took a considerable quantity and some time to distribute. This kind treatment was so different to anything they had met with for years past, that all with one voice called out, in the Chinook language, "Haugh owe yea ah, haugh owe yea ha," meaning, "our friends, our friends." Turning then to the chiefs, we pointed out the duties of the sentinels; signifying that they should explain the purport to all the natives of the place, in order that our slumbers might not be disturbed, and that the present happy intercourse might not be interrupted. This done, the whole party moved off in the most orderly manner; neither did any of them approach us during the night. However, we kept a strict watch until morning.

From the good understanding that existed between ourselves and the natives on a former occasion, and particularly last winter, we anticipated the continuance of a friendly intercourse: but in this we were deceived; that friendship was but of short duration. It was dissolved in a moment by the most frivolous trifle.

I had with me an old favourite dog, a little dwarf terrier of the Spanish breed; we had missed it during the morning, but had not in the bustle and hurry made any inquiry about it. One of the Indians, as it afterwards appeared, had got hold of it, and carried it to his tent. The little captive, in its struggles to get at liberty, happened to scratch one of his children in the face, but got off, and made for us with all haste, just as we were sitting down to breakfast. Happening to turn round, I perceived my little pet running towards us in great fright, and two fellows following it at full speed with their guns in their hands. The poor little thing, on reaching us, lay down, and by its looks seemed to implore protection. No sooner had the rascals, however, got to us, than one of them, with an air of bold effrontery, cocked his gun to shoot the dog. I immediately jumped up, took the gun out of his hands, and tried to pacify him: the fellow was furious, and would give no explanation, but again demanded his gun. I told him he might have his gun if he made no bad use of it. To this he made no reply; but with an air of insolent boldness still demanded his gun. Laying hold of my own gun with one hand, I handed him his with the other, accompanying the delivery with this admonition,—"If you attempt to kill my dog, you are a dead man."

The fellow stood motionless as a statue; but made no attempt to kill the dog. His companion turned back to the camp the moment I laid hold of the gun; and in a few minutes we were surrounded by a hundred clamorous voices, uttering the words, "Ma sats se-Pa she shy hooks, ma sats se-Pa she shy hooks"—bad white people, bad white people. We, however, kept a watchful eye on their manœuvres, armed ourselves, and waited the result. In a little time their excitement began to abate, and we had an opportunity of speaking in our turn; but our voices were scarcely heard in the crowd.

Had we measured the strength of both parties by our comparative numbers, we might at once have yielded to our opponents. But we formed no such comparison; we were compelled through sheer necessity to assert our rights and defend our property, which we did in defiance of all their threats. It is hard to say how the affair might have ended, had not our friend Shy-law-ifs run into the *mêlée*, and stood up boldly for the whites; so that after a great deal of loud clamour and threats, the Indians had to return to their camp, and I saved my little dog.

I mention this trivial circumstance to show how fickle and unsteady Indians are, and how little is required to change their friendship into enmity. In this simple incident you have the true character of an Indian. He will purloin and conceal articles belonging to the whites, and then make a merit of finding them, in order to get paid for his honesty. The hiding of a dog, the concealing of a horse, or anything else, is a common practice of theirs; and the fellow who took the little dog had no other object than to make a claim on delivering it up.

After this affair, we did not consider it good policy to depart from the place without coming to some understanding with the Indians. Putting our camp in a posture of defence to guard against surprise, M'Kenzie and myself went to the Indians and settled the matter in dispute; we gave the scratched bantling a small present, invited the chiefs to our camp to smoke, gave them a little tobacco, and parted once more the best friends in the world; and all this did not take up two hours' time, nor cost five shillings. From this incident it would appear, that the Indian is in some respects a mere child, irritated by and pleased with a trifle.

Our cautious plans did not admit of our proceeding, notwithstanding the apparent good feeling, without having one of the great men to act the part of an interpreter, and to proclaim our friendly footing to others as we advanced, particularly to the troublesome tenants of the Falls; for we were not ignorant that false rumours might get the start of us, and poison the minds of the natives against us.

Such conduct on the part of the Indians of the Cascades may appear strange, after the friendly manner in which our people had been treated by them during the last winter; but this can be easily accounted for, were they less fickle than they are. In the winter season the natives of the place only were on the spot; but in summer the Cascades, as well as the Falls, are a place of general resort for all the neighbouring tribes, as well as those of the place; and this was the case on the present occasion. Hence their numbers and boldness.

The further we advanced the more numerous were the natives, either dwelling in villages or congregated about the banks and rocks in tumultuous crowds. We thought it necessary to make a short halt at each band, according to the rules of former days; and although their gestures were most suspicious at times, yet we never failed to jump ashore and step into the midst of them with assumed confidence; at the same time accosting their great men, and going over the same ceremonies as already noticed. We always passed as if we were old acquaintances on the most friendly terms. No steps within our power were neglected that could be anywise conducive to our safety—an object which now imperiously claimed attention; for rumours were in circulation, that the natives had collected on the river in an unusual manner.

Whenever an occasion called us on shore, a couple of men from each craft, appointed for the purpose, instantly took their stand with fixed bayonets; and a line of privilege was drawn, which the chiefs alone were allowed to pass for the purpose of reception.

Every step we thus made was full of anxiety and apprehension, increased in a two-fold degree during the night; every one of the party was at length so worn out by incessant watching and fatigue, that hope itself began to waver, and we even despaired of getting through; and not to our own puny arm, nor to any further efforts we could make, but to a kind and superintending Providence, we owed our good fortune and safety.

Whenever the sun reached the summit of the hills, the most commanding spot was selected for our encampment. In a few minutes the boats were carried out of the water and placed, with the tents and baggage, in the form of a square, or such other figure as might correspond with the peculiar nature of the ground. This novel fortress had but one opening, which was only wide enough to admit a single person at a time. Of this the tents took up one angle, having the doors outward, and before which a space was left vacant and appropriated for the chiefs. Beyond this was the station occupied by the guards and night-watch, whose duty it was to keep at bay the tumultuous rabble; and here our solitary swivel was regularly pointed.

The chiefs, however, neither passed nor repassed without leave; and under the specious veil of respect for their exalted rank, their influence was in this way made subservient to our views. Their persons were pledges of our safety. Sometimes, in doubtful cases, they were detained over night. Each of our party had a special occupation assigned; and the watch at night being divided into three, we had each of us the direction of one alternately. But in many instances we were all on foot, and on these occasions had to pass a sleepless night.

When on shore the duties rested entirely on the leaders and sentinels. The further we advanced the more we became sensible of the advantages of the newly-adopted though simple system of strengthening our encampment; the natives could not have even the enticing opportunity of seizing or pilfering any article to engender a quarrel; and, as far as a breast-work could go, the people were always sheltered from danger.

Fifteen minutes was the time generally taken to put the camp into a proper state of defence; it would have required about the same time to have jumbled everything pell-mell; when the natives, the property, and ourselves, would have indiscriminately occupied one and the same ground, as had been done by the north-westers hitherto on the Columbia. Indeed, that mode of proceeding was one chief cause, among others, of disorder, and of the bold footing which the natives had assumed, and by which the north-westers had so frequently got themselves involved in serious troubles on the Columbia. To reduce the natives to some order, however desirable, was no easy task, and it was rendered more difficult by the fewness of our numbers. All we could, therefore, attempt, on the present occasion, was gradually to introduce the system of reform, leaving it to be followed up in future.

During our passages through the portages we were unavoidably more or less exposed. On these occasions the pauses or resting-places were only the distance of a gun-shot apart, and guards were placed at each. First the craft were carried and placed in a double row, with an area between sufficiently roomy for the baggage, which was properly ranged as it was brought forward, leaving a vacancy still large enough for the purpose of defence. The motions of the natives were closely scrutinised before we ventured to start again. Half the ships were stationed at one end the pause, and half likewise at the other. It was on such occasions that the influence of these men came most into play; by their means, therefore, we advanced with considerable despatch, and with all the degree of safety which the case would admit of.

On arriving at the Dalles, the most suspicious part of the communication, we found the natives mustered to the number of about one thousand warriors. The war-song and yell warned us of their hostile intentions, and the fears of our friendly Indian only served to confirm our conjectures. We encamped at the commencement of the portage. The object of the natives, we were told, was to establish a perpetual tribute, which, if granted, would be the means of obtaining for us an undisturbed passage.

The subject of tribute had been the result of a general plan settled among the natives. The first appearance of it was manifested at the Wallamitte; but it had been gathering strength for years past, even since the North-Westers had possession of the country. Had the present expedition been conducted in the ordinary way of their travelling in these parts, no doubt it would have been enforced; but M'Kenzie's sudden and unexpected return, and the Indians' remembrance of him in former days, were favourable to us on the present occasion. His open, free-and-easy manner often disarmed the most daring savage; and when one expedient failed, another was always at hand. When the men stood aloof, he caressed their children; which seldom failed to elicit a smile of approbation from the rudest. His knowledge of their character armed him with confidence: in the most suspicious places he would stroll among them, unarmed and alone, when he would allow no other man to step over the lines. He saw at a glance what was working within, and never failed to upset all their designs. Such a sagacious and prudent leader seldom fails to impart confidence to his followers.

We tried to put on as bold a front as possible. The guards were doubled all the night; not one of us slept. The chiefs were prevailed upon to remain in our camp; the men were drawn out and the arms inspected, and the plan of proceeding for the ensuing day fixed upon and explained to the party. We were as desirous of reducing the turbulent natives as they were of reducing us. The motley complement of voyagers comprised a mixture of Iroquois, Abanakees, Owhyhees, and some even of a worse description; and with the exception of a few staunch Canadians, the whole were little better, or more to be depended on, than Indians. This made us unwilling to hazard a battle, and our intention, therefore, was to stand on the defensive; should, however, the necessity of things bring on a combat, we were each of us to head a division, keeping each class unmixed and apart.

On the next morning the Indians were assembled at our camp by break of day. Our men were at their post close to the baggage; our swivel had likewise its station; the Indians eyed it with suspicion. The chiefs, after a parley, received a smoke; and through the medium of our interpreter they were given to understand our determination: if they were advocates for peace, and conducted themselves in an orderly manner, they should be presented with some tobacco at the further end of the portage, as a mark of our friendship.

While thus engaged, and the crowd thronging around us, a fellow, more like a baboon than a man, with a head full of feathers and a countenance of brass, having a fine gun in his hand, called out, "How long are the whites to pass here, troubling our waters and scaring our fish, without paying us? Look at all these bales of goods going to our enemies," said he; "and look at our wives and children naked." The fellow then made a pause, as if waiting an answer; but, as good fortune would have it, the rest of the Indians paid but little attention to him. No answer was made; nor was it a time to discuss the merits or demerits of such a question. Happening, however, to be near the fellow when he spoke, I turned briskly round, "So long," said I, "as the Indians smoke our tobacco; just so long, and no longer, will the whites pass here." Then I put some questions to him in turn. "Who gave you that fine gun in your hand?" "The whites," answered he. "And who gives you tobacco to smoke?" "The whites," he replied. Continuing the subject, "Are you fond of your gun?" "Yes." "And are you fond of tobacco to smoke?" To this question also the reply was "Yes." "Then," said I, "you ought to be fond of the whites, who supply all your wants." "Oh, yes!" rejoined he. The nature of the questions and answers set the bystanders laughing; and taking no further notice of the rascal, he sneaked off among the crowd, and we saw him no more. The question put by the feathered baboon amounted to nothing in itself; but it proved that the subject of tribute had been discussed among the Indians.

By this time the chiefs, whom we were anxious to gain over to our side, had promised to use their influence in our favour; we, therefore, lost no time in transporting our goods across the portage. All was suspense during this eventful day. A constant intercourse by pencil and paper was carried on from end to end of the pauses. The chiefs interested themselves for us; they spoke often, and vehemently; but, from the well-known disposition of the Indian, it was evident that the slightest mistake on our part would destroy the harmony that subsisted between us.

On reaching the further end of the carrying-place, our craft were put into the water, and laden without delay. The natives were increasing in numbers, and our party awaited the conclusion of the scene with anxiety. While I was distributing the promised reward to the chiefs, sixteen men, under the direction of M'Millan, were placed as a guard to keep back the crowd; but they pressed us so hard, that before we had done, the guard, as well as myself, were forced into the water, between the craft and the crowd. Never was I harder pressed, or nearer being crushed, than on that day. Two men were nearly losing their lives in the water, and more than once we despaired of getting ourselves extricated.

The bows were strung, the arrows already out of their quivers. Signs were repeatedly made to the multitude to fall back; and just as the guard and all were hurrying to embark, the word was issued for the men to raise their arms: thrice was the order repeated before they obeyed. The interval was critical; I cannot describe it. Let the reader picture in his own mind our situation. In this perilous position, a final notice was given to the natives to depart; and as a last resource in this emergency the swivel was pointed from one of the boats. For a moment all was silent. The chiefs, who had been overwhelmed by the crowd, now getting themselves extricated, set the example, and the whole multitude fell back a few paces. Our people, taking advantage of the favourable moment, embarked; while a third of our party were employed in getting the craft pushed off, the remainder, with their arms facing the natives, kept their position until all was clear and ready for a fair start; then embarking, we hoisted sail, our guns still pointed to the crowd; we were soon beyond their reach. Not an arrow flew, not a trigger was drawn.

Had the Indians been aware of the movement made for defence at our departure, it is a question if they would have overlooked the opportunities that offered while we were more or less separated in making the portage; it never having been usual to take such precautions. But by this determined conduct their views were completely frustrated: no tribute was exacted. Had a different line been pursued, and had they once gained their point of extorting tribute, in a few voyages the whole lading would no doubt have had to pass for that purpose, and to the loss of property that of lives must inevitably have been added. In dangerous or hostile rencounters, the Indians generally single out the leaders as the first victims, considering the remainder of the party easily managed from their probable confusion. This appears to have been the case on the present occasion; for it was remarked that three daring fellows were seen hovering about us adjusting their weapons; and the surmise was confirmed by report.

The gentleman at the head of affairs, after signifying the necessity of a sharp look-out, walked up and presented these three desperadoes with a stone to sharpen their arrows; then sternly eyeing them all three alternately, he stamped with his foot, slapped the butt end of his gun, and opening the pans of his rifle and pistols, he primed anew, to show them that his arms were likewise ready. He then insisted on their sitting down and composing themselves. They did so with apparently great reluctance, and at the same time laid down their arrows as a token of submission; which taking place in the full view of the crowd made them look very sheepish. The effect, as far as we could judge, did not operate amiss: the demagogue who goes by the name of the Red Jacket, also became useful, and interested himself; no doubt, to reclaim our favour and get a piece of tobacco.

During the first day, after our leaving the Dalles, we saw on almost every point, crowds on their way to the rendezvous; from which we inferred that the whole body of Indians had not yet been assembled at the appointed place: and perhaps to that circumstance, more than to any other, we owed our safety. From the Falls, our friend from the Cascades, after being rewarded with a new suit, returned back to his people. During the remainder of the voyage, the banks of the river for a great way were covered with the natives. We made a short halt at each considerable camp, and the same attentions were paid to the chiefs in a greater or less degree, according as their respective merits and the aspect of things demanded. In passing by scattered bands, a few leaves of the envied plant were thrown upon the beach; sometimes this offering of friendship fell into the water, but this was productive of an equal effect, as the natives in a twinkling plunged into the river to secure it. Some of the villages we passed had upwards of a thousand inhabitants, particularly those about the Great Forks.

My craft happening to fall behind a little, one of the natives took offence at my handing to his companion a leaf or two of tobacco which was intended for both; the villain lost no time in bending his bow, and had he not been arrested in the act by my levelling my gun at him, he would most likely have made sure of his mark.

At length arriving at the succession of bad steps, called the Priest's Rapid, we were happily relieved from the importunities and annoyance of our numerous and designing neighbours on the south. Henceforth we travelled among those more friendly, as we advanced towards the north. The innumerable bands of Indians assembled along the communication this year rendered an uncommon degree of watchfulness necessary; and more particularly as our sole dependence lay on them for our daily subsistence. I have passed and re-passed many times, but never saw so many Indians in one season along the communication; we had reason to be thankful at our singular good luck throughout.

On arriving at Oakanagan, six hundred miles from the ocean, I set out immediately for my winter quarters at the She-whaps, leaving my friends M'Kenzie and M'Millan to do the same.

It may now occur to the reader, that on arriving at Oakanagan our voyage was ended, and that henceforth we had nothing else to do. The case was, however, very different. I had still to put three hundred miles behind me ere I reached my own destination, and the others nearly as many; but the most singular circumstance was, that some of the party after travelling so far north, had, at this stage of the voyage, to wheel round and proceed again south: a most defective arrangement.

Under existing regulations, the first halt of each brigade was at Oakanagan. This was the point of general separation; although the depôt for the interior was still one hundred and forty miles further east, at a place called Spokane House. Now whatever Oakanagan might have been, Spokane House, of all the posts in the interior, was the most unsuitable place for concentrating the different branches of the trade. But a post had been established at that place in the early days of the trade, and after the country had become thoroughly known, people were averse to change what long habit had made familiar to them; so Spokane House still remained. Hence, both men and goods were, year after year, carried two hundred miles north by water, merely to have the pleasure of sending them two hundred miles south again by land, in order to reach their destination.

To obviate this serious difficulty, it had been contemplated to have the depôt of the interior removed from Spokane House to the Grand Forks, or Wallawalla; making either of these places, as being more central, the general rendezvous. But many objections to this change were urged. The country was too dangerous, the natives too hostile: the measure was deemed impracticable. These were the ostensible reasons; but the real cause lay deeper beneath the surface.

Spokane House was a retired spot; no hostile natives were there to disquiet a great man. There the Bourgeois who presided over the Company's affairs resided, and that made Spokane House the centre of attraction. There all the wintering parties, with the exception of the northern district, met. There they were all fitted out: it was the great starting point; although six weeks' travel out of the direct line of some, and more or less inconvenient to all. But that was nothing: these trifles never troubled the great man.

At Spokane House, too, there were handsome buildings: there was a ball-room, even; and no females in the land so fair to look upon as the nymphs of Spokane; no damsels could dance so gracefully as they; none were so attractive. But Spokane House was not celebrated for fine women only; there were fine horses also. The race-ground was admired, and the pleasures of the chace often yielded to the pleasures of the race. Altogether

Spokane House was a delightful place, and time had confirmed its celebrity.

Yet with all these attractions in favour of the far-famed Spokane House, the unsparing M'Kenzie contemplated its removal; it was marked out by him as a useless and expensive drawback upon the trade of the interior, and Wallawalla pitched upon as the future general rendezvous of the inland trade. This step deeply wounded the feelings of his colleagues, and raised in the breasts of all lovers of pleasure a prodigious outcry against him!

As to the reasons assigned against Wallawalla, by those opposed to a change, we might here remark, that the plan of non-intercourse, which we had generally observed towards the natives, was calculated rather to keep up a state of hostility than otherwise. For if we wished to reduce the turbulent spirit of the natives, it was not by avoiding them that we could do so; but by mixing with them: we must live with them and they with us; we must carry on a free intercourse with them, and familiarise them by that intercourse. If this plan had been followed up at first, the result, as in other similar cases, would have, no doubt, been favourable to both parties. At all events a step so necessary and so essential to our interest and theirs ought to have had a fair trial.

Some time before our arrival at the She-whaps one of the men I had with me, named Brusseau, alias Aland, fell very sick, and was so feeble, that he was unable to continue the journey. It being impossible for us to remain with him, I got a small place fixed up, near wood and water, and leaving a man to take care of him, and a spade, in case of his death, to bury him, we left him, with but little hopes of recovery.

On the tenth day after we had departed, the man whom I had put to take care of Brusseau arrived at the fort with the news of his death, and on my asking him where the spade was, he said the Indians had stolen it. All this, as a matter of course, passed for truth, until some time afterwards, when who should turn up but poor dead Brusseau, escorted by some friendly Indians.

It would appear that the cowardly and faithless fellow whom I had left to take care of him, got frightened at the approach of some Indians, fled, and abandoned Brusseau to his fate; who, being left alone, must have perished, but for the timely appearance of some natives, who administered to his wants, and thus enabled him not only to leave the spot already doomed as his grave, but also to bring home in his own hands the very instrument that was to have buried him.

In our original plan it was proposed to include the transactions of every year in a chapter by themselves; but finding, as in the present instance, that it would be of inconvenient length, I have resolved to deviate slightly by dividing the operations of this year into two chapters.

## CHAPTER V.

New quarter—Trip of discovery—General remarks—The object—Departure—Courses—New guide—Friendly Lake—Confidence in our guide—New direction—Grisly-bear River—Beaver ravages—Wild animals—Bear's den—The lair——Dreary prospect—Eagle Hill—A man wounded—The guide's remarks—Arrival at the Rocky Mountains—Grand view—Size of the timber—Canoe River—The Elk—Prepare for our return—Thunder-storm—Indian superstitions—Pass Eagle Hill—Game abundant—Change our road—The fight—Eagle and Grouse—Conclusion of our journey—Result—General aspect of the country—Prospects—The new Express—Council at the Falls—At the Cascades—Fidelity of the natives—The point gained—Commercial views—Difficulties disregarded—Troubles—A horse shot—Conduct of the Iroquois—The affray—Plots and plans—Views for extending the trade—Failure—Second attempt—Success among the tribes—Bear-hunting—Chief wounded—Conduct of the natives—Sympathy—The disappointment—Wolf-hunting—The whites—The lucky shot—Indian surprise—Chief and his horse—Fur trader's life—His recreations—Arrive at Fort George.

HAVING in the preceding chapter closed our remarks on the voyage, and reached our winter quarters, we shall now turn our attention to the transactions of the Northern district.

In this extensive field but little had yet been done in the way of discovering the resources of the country; the greater part of which was unknown to its traders. I therefore received orders from head quarters to examine the eastern section, lying between the She-whaps and the Rocky Mountains: a large tract of wild country never before trodden by the foot of any white man; to ascertain the resources of this hitherto unknown waste, as regards its furs and general appearance; and to find out the shortest route between our starting point and Canoe River, lying at the foot of the mountains: this task I had to perform without a guide, or a single additional man, beyond the usual complement of the post.

Our readers will naturally suppose that an exploring party destined for the discovery of any new part of the country ought to be dignified with the name expedition; but there is no such appellation customary here. Whatever be the extent of the undertaking, there is no great preparation made beforehand; because the ordinary routine of every day's duty is as full of adventure and hardship as it could be on a voyage of discovery, even were it to the North Pole. No salute is fired at starting, no *feu de joie* on returning; and the party set off with such means as are available at the time. Sometimes these means are more, sometimes less; according to circumstances, the rank of the leader, or the extent of the undertaking; but they are always simple. The traders, from the very nature of their employment, are daily familiarised with difficulties and dangers, and not unfrequently exposed to the severest privations; so that their ingenuity, sharpened by experience, seldom fails to overcome the greatest obstacles that can be presented by mountains or plains, by woods or by water, or by the still more dreaded arm of the lawless savage.

An experienced person in the Indian countries, with only one or two men, their guns, and a few loads of ammunition, would think no more of crossing the desert from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in the most wild and unfrequented parts, than any other man in ordinary life would of crossing a country parish from one side to the other; and they seldom fail with means the most slender. We may take the present undertaking as an example, although a petty one; yet those upon a larger scale in this country differ in no material point, either as to men or means. After remaining at the She-whaps for a few days, settling the affairs of the place, I prepared for my journey; but had recorded experience to teach me this time not to depend altogether on the faith of Indians, who might leave me in the lurch, as they had done before in my attempt to reach the Pacific.

Taking therefore two of my own best and most experienced hands, together with two Indians, myself making the fifth person, we left Fort She-whaps on the 14th day of August, intending to perform the journey on foot. Each man was provided with half a dozen pairs of Indian shoes, a blanket to sleep in, ammunition, a small axe, a knife, a fire-steel, and an awl, together with some needles, thread, and tobacco to smoke; all of which he had to carry on his back, and his gun on his shoulder; and this constituted the whole of our travelling baggage, with the exception of a cooking kettle and a pint pot. Each person had the same weight to carry, and the equipment is the same in all such cases, be the journey for a week, for a month, or for a year. We depended all the time on our guns for our subsistence; and for a further supply of shoes and clothes, on the skins of the animals we might chance to kill on our way.

At the outset we proceeded up the North, or Sun-tea-coot-a-coot River, for three days; then turning to the right, we took to the woods, steering our course in the eye of the rising sun, nearly midway between Thompson's River on the south, and Fraser's River on the north. The first day after turning our backs on North River, we made but little progress; but what we made was in an easterly direction. The second day our courses per compass were, E.S.E. 6 miles, E. 4 miles, S.E. 2 miles, E. by N. 5 miles, E. 1 mile, N.E. 2 miles, N.N.E. 4 miles: we then encamped. The country through which we passed this day was covered with heavy timber, but having clear bottom and being good travelling, with here and there small open plains. During the third day the face of the country became timberless, with frequently open clear ground, so that we made a long day's journey. In the evening we fell upon a small lake, on the northern margin of which we encamped for the night. Here we found two Indian families, living on fish, roots, and berries, which they were all employed in procuring: they belonged to the Sun-tea-coot-a-coot tribe, and seemed in their wretched condition to live very comfortably and happily. One of the men belonging to these families, who pretended to have a perfect knowledge of the country through which we had to pass, volunteered to accompany us as a guide; for which services I promised to reward him with a blanket and some ammunition when we returned. In consequence of this new acquisition to our party, we proceeded without having much recourse to our compass, and without any doubt as to the difficulties of the road being overcome. Leaving this place, which we called Friendly Lake, we proceeded on our journey with feelings of great confidence as to our ultimate success.

We had now resolved to follow our guide, having every confidence in his knowledge of the country; but instead of taking us by an easterly direction, he bent his course almost due north, for about sixty miles. We then reached a small river, called Ke-low-naskar-am-ish, or Grisly-bear River, which we ascended in nearly an easterly direction for six days, until it became so narrow that we could have jumped over it. While following this little stream, we passed several beaver lodges, and observed many marks of the ravages of that animal. In many places great trees had been cut down, and the course of the water stopped and formed into small lakes and ponds, by the sagacious and provident exertions of the beaver: in one place we counted forty-two trees cut down at the height of about eighteen inches from the root, within the compass of half an acre. We now began to think we had found the goose that lays golden eggs; this, however, was a delusion. Some low points were covered with poplars, and other soft wood; and wherever that timber and water were plentiful, there were beaver, but not in great numbers. Few fur animals were seen after passing this place; for from thenceforward the face of the country changed materially; being in general too rocky, hard, and flinty for beaver. Huge rocks at every step barred our way: it is a country for goats. Elks and deer were frequently seen in great numbers, and all of them appeared very tame for wild animals, a sure indication of their being but seldom disturbed: never, indeed, had they been disturbed before by civilised man!

Along Grisly-bear River we shot four elks, twenty-two deer, two otters, two beavers, and three black bears, without stepping out of our way. But the bears were poor, and the only cause we could assign for it was the scarcity of berries and fish; for these animals generally frequent fruit and fish countries; and we did not notice any fish in the river. Tracks of wild animals, wherever the ground was soft, were abundant, crossing the road in every direction.

In one of the thickets, as we passed along, our guide took us a little out of our way to show us what he called a bear's haunt, or wintering den; where that animal, according to Indian story, remains in a dark and secluded retreat, without food or nourishment, for months together, sucking its paws! There was nothing remarkable in the place: the entrance to the lair or den was through a long and winding thicket of dense brushwood; and the bear's hiding-place was not in a hole under ground, but on the surface, deeply imbedded among the fallen leaves. Over the den, the snow is often many feet thick, and the bear's hiding-place is discovered only by an air hole resembling a small funnel, sometimes not two inches in diameter, through which the breath issues; but so concealed from view, that none but the keen eye of the savage can find it out.

In this den the bear is said to lie in a torpid state from December till March. They do not lie together in families, but singly, and when they make their exit in the spring, they are very sleek and fat. To their appearance at this season, I can bear ample testimony, having frequently seen them. But no sooner do they leave their winter quarters, and begin to roam about, than they get poor and haggard. The bear is said never to winter twice in the same place. In their retreats, they are often found out and killed by the Indians without making the least resistance.

A short distance from Bear Thicket is a towering height, resembling a round tower, which we ascended. Here we had a pretty good view of the country around; but it was a dreary prospect: the rugged rocks, with their treeless and shrubless tops, almost forbade us to advance.

On this hill or tower we shot a large white-headed eagle, which gave a name to the place. Here we inscribed on the south side of a dwarfy pine, "September 2nd, 1817;" and had I at the time had a dram to have given my men, they would no doubt have identified the barren spot by a may-pole, or lop-stick, on its top, to commemorate our visit according to north-west custom. Here our guide told us that, in five or six days more, we should reach our journey's end. He added, that the She-whap Indians formerly passed that way on their travels to the east side of the mountains, where they often, when numerous and strong, went to trade, or make war; but that of late they seldom ventured to meet the Assiniboins of the woods, or the Crees of the plains, in that quarter. Not far from Eagle Hill, we came to some water, where we saw signs of beaver; but by no means so plentiful as to entitle it to the name of a beaver country.

Our guide told us that these parts were in no respect entitled to be called places of beaver. From Friendly Lake to Eagle Hill, by the road we came, on a rough calculation, is 155 miles.

After passing several hours on this rocky pinnacle, we set out again on our journey; but in descending the rugged cliffs, one of my men cut his foot very badly, which detained us for nearly a whole day, and so disabled the unfortunate man, that we had almost made up our minds to leave him behind until our return; but as this step would have deprived us of another man to take care of him, we decided to keep together, so we dragged him along with us, and he soon recovered.

Our course, after leaving Eagle Hill, was generally S.E.; but in order to avoid clambering over rocks and mountains, we had to wind in tortuous courses, the best way we could, among the intricate defiles that every now and then crossed our path. Thus we made but little headway; so that after an arduous day's travel, we sometimes scarcely put ten miles behind us in a direct line. As we advanced the wild animals did not seem to increase in number, although our guns always procured us a sufficient supply of food; but the circuitous, and in many places dangerous, passes we had to wind through, discouraged us. The precipitous rocks required the foot of a dog and the eye of a hawk, to guard against accident at all times.

As we journeyed along our guide took us up to another height, and pointing out the country generally, said that he had passed and repassed through various parts of it seven different times, and in as many different places. He seemed to know it well, and observed that the road we had travelled, with all its difficulties, was the very best to be found. There were, he said, some other parts better furnished with water, and likewise several small lakes; but beaver was scarce over all; and as to water communication, there was none. Therefore we at once condemned it, as far as we had yet seen, as both impracticable and dangerous, destitute of beaver and everything else, so far as the purposes of commerce were concerned.

On the 10th of September, being the ninth day after leaving Eagle Hill, we reached what our guide called the foot of the Rocky Mountains; but the ascent all along had been apparently so gradual, and the country so very rugged, with a broken and uneven surface, that we could observe no very perceptible difference in the height of the land until we came close under the brow of the dividing ridge; but there the difference was certainly striking. The guide had led us to a considerable eminence some distance out of our way, from which, in looking back, we beheld the country we had passed over; and certainly a more wild and rugged land the mind of man could not imagine. In looking before us, that is, towards the mountains, the view was completely barred: an almost perpendicular front met the eye like a wall, and we stood and gazed at what might be called one of the wonders of the world. One circumstance struck us very forcibly, and that was, the increased size of the timber. Along the base of the mountains, the timber, which had been stunted and puny, now became gigantic in size; the pines and cedars in particular: one of the latter measured forty-five feet four inches in girth, four feet from the ground.

After passing some time looking around us, we descended and encamped at the edge of the small and insignificant stream called Canoe River, celebrated among North-westers for the quality of its birch bark. So completely were its banks overhung and concealed with heavy timber, that it was scarcely visible at the short distance of fifty yards. It is a mere rill among rivers, being in some places not more than fifteen paces broad; its course is almost due south, and it flows over a stony bottom, with low banks, clear cold water, and a strong current. Here our guide told us that in two days' moderate travel we could reach its mouth, where it enters the Columbia near portage point. Everything here wore the appearance and stillness of the midnight hour: the scene was gloomy, and scarcely the chirping of a solitary bird was to be heard; our own voices alone disturbed the universal silence. In all this extent of desert through which we had passed, not a human being was to be seen, nor the traces of any.

At Canoe River we spent the greater part of two days strolling about its banks; when, having accomplished the object of our journey, rested ourselves, and mended our shoes, we prepared to retrace our steps. Just as we were tying up our bundles to start, a fine moose deer plunged into the river before us; it had scarcely time to reach the opposite shore before it was shot down: this detained us a few hours longer, as we stopped and dined on the fresh supply, bagging the tongue and nose. We now turned our backs on Canoe River, and bidding farewell to the mountains, took to the wilderness again; following, as nearly as possible, the road we had come, only at intervals deviating from it. The second day after starting we had very heavy thunder, with a torrent of rain, which impeded our progress; for the thick brushwood and long grass rendered travelling in dry weather not over pleasant, but in wet weather intolerable.

As the thunder and rain increased, I expressed a wish to take shelter under the cliff of a projecting rock until the storm abated; but our guide smiled at my ignorance: "Do not the whites know," asked he, "that there is a bad spirit there?" and he would not go near it, nor hear of our approaching the rock that offered us shelter. I replied he might stop; but I should go. "No, no!" said he, "the thunder may not kill you, but it will kill the Indians. Do you wish us to die?" So I yielded the point; and we remained exposed to the fury of the storm all the time. "That rocky height," said he, pointing to one near us, "has fire in it, and the thunder keeps always about it." On my inquiring into the nature of the fire, he observed, "Snow never remains there; it is hot, and smokes all the winter. There is a bad spirit in it. Three years ago, two of our people who took shelter there were killed—the Kasht-sam-mah dwells there." I then asked him if that was the only rock that smoked during winter in these parts. He answered, "No; there are several others a little further on that smoke: but the Indians never go near them; and wild animals in going past them are often killed. Plenty of bones are there; and the thunder is always loudest there. The bad spirit, or Kasht-sam-mah, lives there." We, however, saw no indications of a volcanic nature near it: it was, in my opinion, pure superstition. The weather clearing up soon after, we continued our journey.

On the seventh day from Canoe River we reached Eagle Hill; but we did not stop there. From that place, our guide took us by a new road—I ought to say in a different direction—with the view of shortening our distance; but we gained little by the change. Not far from Eagle Hill we shot two grisly-bears and a bird of the vulture tribe. Deer and elk were very numerous. In this direction we likewise passed a considerable lake in which were several musk-rat lodges; we shot a swan, and saw two wolves prowling about, and [illegible] the first time saw tracks of the martin. Six days from Eagle Hill brought us back again to Friendly Lake, where the relations of our guide were left; but they had removed from the place, leaving no trace apparently. The guide, however, after looking about for some time, noticed a small stick stuck up in the ground, rather leaning to one side, with a small notch in it. After examining the position of the stick and the notch, he observed to me, "My relations are at such a place: the inclination of the stick pointed out," he said, "the direction they had gone, and the notch meant one day's journey off." It being in our line of march, we came up to them at the very place the guide had stated.

With the guide's relations we passed a night and part of the next day, as two of my men had the soles of their feet blistered by walking. Starting again without the Indians, our guide still accompanied us. Here again we took another new road, and crossed the woods in a south-west direction, thinking to shorten our distance considerably. By this course we avoided going to North River altogether, until within a short distance of the fort. Here the woods assumed a more healthy appearance, the timber became much larger, and the rocks gave place to a rich and fertile soil.

On reaching a small open plain, we perceived at a little distance off, two large birds in the act of fighting, much in the same way as do our domestic fowl. We made a halt, and, unperceived, I approached them till within gun-shot, and kept watching their motions for some time; at last I showed myself, when one of the birds tried to fly off; but was scarcely able to keep itself up, and soon alighted again. I still approached, when the bird tried to get up again; as it was in the act of rising, I fired and brought it to the ground; but the other never stirred from its place. The bird I had shot proved to be a white-headed eagle; the other was a wild turkey cock, or what we call the Columbia grouse: a bold and noble bird. The grouse was nearly blind, for during the combat the eagle had almost torn out its eyes; yet it disdained to yield, and might have ultimately come off the conqueror, for the eagle was very much exhausted and nearly blind of an eye. The fight had been long and well contested, for the grass all round the spot, for some twenty yards, was beaten to the ground, and the feathers of the combatants were strewed about in their fierce and bloody struggles. The grouse weighed 11¼ lbs.; the eagle only 8¾ lbs. We carried both birds along with us.

By the road we last took, we shortened our distance nearly a day's travel; but what we saved in shoes we lost in clothes, for almost all we had was torn to pieces. We reached the fort, after a laborious journey of forty-seven days, on the 29th of September.

According to the most correct estimate, the distance between the She-whaps and Canoe River does not, by the route we travelled, exceed 420 miles, and in a direct line, not much more than half that distance. From all I saw or could learn, however, in reference to the country generally, little can be said in its favour. No road for the purpose of land transport appeared to me practicable; nor do I conceive it possible to make one without an expense that the prospects of the country would by no means warrant. As to a water communication, there is none except by Thompson's River, and that is practicable but a very small part of the way; elsewhere there is none but Fraser's on the north. As a barren waste well stocked in wild animals of the chace, and some few furs, the trade on a small scale, apart from the She-whaps, might be extended to some advantage in this quarter, and the returns conveyed either to the latter post or to the mouth of Canoe River.

Leaving the affairs of my own district, we shall bestow a cursory glance at what was going on in another quarter. The season was now at hand when the company's despatches were wont to arrive, and a brigade as usual escorted them from the interior to Fort George. As soon, therefore, as they arrived, M'Kenzie made no hesitation in delivering over these important documents into the hands of the natives, to carry them to their destination. This appeared a strange mark of confidence in the fidelity of this almost hostile race. It seemed doubtful even to us, that a novel experiment of the kind should succeed in this quarter, while it was remarked, that similar instances could never be brought to succeed with the Indians of more settled countries. At the Falls a council of the chiefs and wise men was solemnly held over the despatches; but, after a very short delay, they sent them forward. At the Cascades more serious meetings disputed their fate; but after being detained by a variety of alternations for three days, it seemed that good fortune again prevailed, and they went on from hand to hand with wonderful expedition; the answer was also conveyed back to the interior by the same hands, with unheard-of rapidity.

In the contemplation of this plan, the council at head quarters had suggested the propriety of one set of couriers performing the whole journey; but M'Kenzie, with his usual sagacity, saw this would cause jealousy and eventually fail; he therefore managed so as to have the despatches conveyed from one tribe to another, placing confidence in all; and therefore all seemed equally entrusted, and equally ambitious to discharge the trust reposed in them.

By this means of conveyance, a voyage which employed forty or fifty men was avoided; consequently obviating the risk of lives, loss of time, and heavy expenses: the charges incurred being a mere trifle. Not only were these advantages obtained; but that which strength and weapons could scarcely bring about, was effected by a sheet of paper conveying our ideas to one another: it imprinted on the superstitious minds of the savages a religious veneration for the superior endowments of the white man. They appreciated the confidence placed in them, and this custom was afterwards continued: a Columbia Indian was always ready to start in the capacity of courier, for the boon of a few strings of beads, or a few shots of ammunition.

When the different establishments were outfitted and put in train for the season, M'Kenzie, with all the residue of the people, set out on a voyage of hunting and discovery to the south of Lewis River, bordering on the Snake frontiers. His party consisted chiefly of such men as were otherwise found of little service in the wintering ground, being almost all composed of Iroquois and other refuse: they were five and thirty strong; but of this motley crew, five Canadians formed the only support he could trust to with confidence.

No sooner were they arrived in the midst of the Nez Percés, on their way to their winter quarters, than the Iroquois, perceiving their superiority in numerical strength over the few whites, instead of acting up to their respective duties, contrived plots against their leader and the slender band of Canadians that were about him. A trifling incident, which we are about to mention, blew the whole into flame.

The Iroquois, contrary to the established rules of the trade and the general practice among the natives, trafficked privately with the Indians; which conduct had once or twice before nearly caused serious quarrels between the natives and the party. The Iroquois had been repeatedly warned against such practices, but without effect: they still continued to act as before. Grand Pierre, one of the Iroquois, bargaining with an Indian for a horse, a misunderstanding arose between them, and a quarrel was likely to ensue; when the Iroquois applied to his Bourgeois, at the same time asking him for a variety of things to satisfy the Indian, from whom he had got the horse. M'Kenzie, annoyed at the conduct of Pierre and the Iroquois generally, and wishing to put a final stop to such dangerous interference in future, paid the Indian, and then drawing a pistol from his belt, shot the horse dead upon the spot. This act ought to have warned Pierre and his companions of their misconduct; it caused a considerable talk at the moment. The Iroquois grumbled and retired; but from that moment they meditated the destruction of their leader.

Being as cowardly as perfidious, and in order to make sure of their blow, they set to work to gain the natives on their side, that they might throw the guilt of the deed on their shoulders. But this only served to draw down upon them the contempt of the party, and eventually divulged their schemes before they were ripe for execution.

rangers on the present occasion was the chief, Short Legs, who, while scrambling over some fallen timber, happened to stumble near to where the wounded and enraged bear was concealed, but too close to be able to defend himself before the vicious animal got hold of him. At that moment I was not more than five or six paces from the chief, but could not get a chance of shooting, so I immediately called out for help, when several mustered round the spot. Availing ourselves of the doubtful alternative of killing her—even at the risk of killing the chief—we fired, and as good luck would have it, shot the animal and saved the man; then carrying the bear and wounded chief out of the bush, we laid both on the open ground. The sight of the chief was appalling: the scalp was torn from the crown of his head, down over the eyebrows! he was insensible, and for some time we all thought him dead; but after a short interval his pulse began to beat, and he gradually showed signs of returning animation.

It was a curious and somewhat interesting scene to see the party approach the spot where the accident happened. Not being able to get a chance of shooting, they threw their guns from them, and could scarcely be restrained from rushing on the fierce animal with their knives only. The bear all the time kept looking first at one, then at another, and casting her fierce and flaming eyes around the whole of us, as if ready to make a spring at each;

yet she never let go her hold of the chief; but stood over him. Seeing herself surrounded by so many enemies, she moved her head from one position to another, and these movements gave us ultimately an opportunity of killing her.

The misfortune produced a loud and clamorous scene of mourning among the chief's relations; we hastened home, carrying our dead bears along with us, and arrived at the camp early in the morning of the fourth day. The chief remained for three days speechless. In cutting off the scalp and dressing the wound, we found the skull, according to our imperfect knowledge of anatomy, fractured in two or three places; and at the end of eight days, I extracted a bone measuring two inches long, of an oblong form, and another of about an inch square, with several smaller pieces, all from the crown of the head! The wound, however, gradually closed up and healed, except a small spot about the size of an English shilling. In fifteen days, by the aid of Indian medicine, he was able to walk about, and at the end of six weeks from the time he got wounded, he was on horseback again at the chace.

The tide of sympathy for the great man's misfortunes did not run high, for at best he was but an unprincipled fellow, an enemy to the whites, and hated by his own people. Many were of opinion that the friendly bear had at last rid us of an unfriendly chief; but to the disappointment of all, he set the bear and wounds at defiance, and was soon, to our great annoyance, at his old trade of plotting mischief.

Wolf-hunting as well as bear-hunting occasionally occupies the attention of the natives. In these parts both species are numerous. The former is an inhabitant of the plains, the latter of the woods. Wolves and foxes are often run down on horseback, hunted with the gun, or caught in traps. With all the cunning of the fox, however, the wolf is far more difficult to decoy or entrap, being shy, guarded, and suspicious.

During the winter season a good many wolves and foxes were caught by the whites, with hook and line as we catch fish; with this difference, however, that the latter are taken in water, the former on dry land. For this purpose three cod-hooks are generally tied together back to back, baited, and then fixed with a line to the branch of a tree, so that the hooks are suspended in the air at the distance of four or five feet from the ground. To get hold of the bait, the wolf has to leap up, and the moment the hooks catch their hold it finds itself either in a standing or suspended position, which deprives the animal of its strength; neither can it in that posture cut the line: it is generally caught, sometimes dead, sometimes alive.

The catching of wolves, foxes, or other wild animals by the whites, was, however, the work only of leisure hours. We always preferred the gun to any other mode of destruction. In these parts, as well as in many others, the wolves prowled about night and day; their favourite haunts were on hillocks or other eminences, on which they would stand to rest or look about them for some time. We therefore used to scatter bones or bits of meat as decoys to attract them, and in the intervals practised ourselves in shooting at these frequented spots, taking different elevations with the gun, until habit and experience had enabled us to hit a small object at a very great distance, and with as much precision as if the object had been near to us.

A band of Indians happening to come to the fort one day, and observing a wolf on one of the favourite places of resort, several of them prepared to take a circuitous turn to have a shot at the animal. Seeing them prepare—"Try," said I, "and kill it from where you are." The Indians smiled at my ignorance. "Can the whites," said the chief, "kill it at that distance?" "The whites," said I, "do not live by hunting or shooting as do the Indians, or they might." "There is no gun," continued the chief, "that could kill at that distance." By this time the wolf had laid hold of a bone, or piece of flesh, and was scampering off with it, at full speed, to the opposite woods. Taking hold of my gun—"If we cannot kill it," said I, "we shall make it let go its prey." "My horse against your shot," called out the chief, "that you do not hit the wolf." "Done," said I; but I certainly thought within myself that the chief ran no great risk of losing his horse, nor the wolf of losing its life. Taking an elevation of some fifteen or sixteen feet over it, by chance I shot the animal in his flight, to the astonishment of the chief, as well as all present, who, clapping their hands to their mouths in amazement, measured the distance by five arrow-shots: nothing but their wonder could exceed their admiration of this effect of fire-arms.

When the ball struck the wolf, it was in the act of leaping; and we may judge of its speed at the time, from the fact that the distance from whence it took the last leap to where it was lying stretched, measured twenty-four feet! The ball struck the wolf in the left thigh, and passing through the body, neck and head, it lodged in the lower jaw; I cut it out with my pen-knife. The chief, on delivering up his horse, which he did cheerfully, asked me for the ball, and that ball was the favourite ornament of his neck for years afterwards. The horse I returned to its owner. The Indians then asked me for the skin of the dead wolf; and to each of the guns belonging to the party was appended a piece: the Indians fancying that the skin would enable them, in future, to kill animals at a great distance.

The incidents, adventures, and narrow escapes, which, in the course of this year, we have had to notice, may throw some transient light on a fur-trader's life in this country; his duties, his troubles, his amusements, and his pleasures. And one of the greatest pleasures, here alluded to, consists in doing homage to the great. A chief arrives; the honour of waiting upon him in a servile capacity falls to your share, if you are not above your business. You go forth to meet him; invite him in; see him seated; and, if need require it, you untie his shoes, and dry his socks. You next hand him food, water and tobacco; and you must smoke along with him. After which, you must listen with grave attention to all he has got to say on Indian topics, and show your sense of the value of his information by giving him some trinkets, and sometimes even articles of value, in return. But the grand point of all this ceremony is to know how far you should go in these matters, and when you should stop. Nor must you forget that Indians are acute observers of men and things; and generally possess retentive memories. By overdoing the thing, you may entail on yourself endless troubles.

When not employed in exploring new and unfrequented parts, involved in difficulties with the natives, or finding opposition in trade, the general routine of dealing with most Indians goes on smoothly. Each trading-post has its leader, its interpreter, and its own complement of hands; and when things are put in a proper train, according to the customs of the country, the business of the year proceeds without much trouble, and leaves you sufficient time for

A short time previously, the Indians had mentioned something of the kind to our people; who, however, discredited the whole as a piece of deception, got up to answer some purpose of their own; and it passed unheeded. The Iroquois learning, however, that the Indians had made their designs known to the whites, were determined not to be foiled in their purpose; so one of the villains immediately arming himself, and calling upon his comrades to follow him, sallied forth for his master's tent, just at the break of day. Joachin, the Iroquois interpreter, a faithful and zealous servant, having overheard what was going on, rushed into his Bourgeois' tent, not half a minute before the assassin and one of his gang got there, and called out "Murder! murder!" In the confusion, M'Kenzie, who had been asleep, could not put his hands on his pistols, but grasping one of the tent poles, he brought his assailant to the ground at the first blow; another who followed close after, shared the same fate. By this time, some of the Canadians and faithful Owhyhees arrived to their master's assistance, and the Iroquois fled.

In this instance M'Kenzie's strength and activity of body were of much service to him; but not more than his coolness and decision in the moment of danger.

The plan of the Iroquois was to murder their leader while asleep, and to escape with the property out of the country in a body; but the safety of M'Kenzie and the success of his affairs resting entirely on promptness of action, he resolutely chastised the ringleader and others on the spot; nor had the tomahawks which the villains brandished over his head, the effect of averting the punishment their treacherous conduct deserved. In the face of the natives, therefore, it was his good fortune to reduce his treacherous servants to a sense of their duty. But he did not think it prudent to trust them further in the prosecution of his plans; which, by this unforeseen event, experienced a partial failure for the year.

He dispersed the Iroquois: one was sent to me at Oakanagan, two to Spokane House, and the rest placed on separate hunting-grounds in the neighbourhood, under the eye of an influential chief, where they could do no harm. Then with the remainder of his people he wheeled about in another direction, intending to carry on the project of hunting and of discovery for the season, although upon a more contracted scale. His primary object was to conclude an arrangement with the Nez Percés, and in the Snake country to conciliate the Indians, with a view to open the way for extending the trade as soon as existing prejudices gave way; for he was surprised at the unfavourable change which the Indians had undergone, during the short period the country had been under the domination of the North-West Company He frequently observed to me that a change of system was necessary to reduce the Indians to order and to reclaim the trade; both being on the brink of ruin.

With this view, he undertook, at a late season of the year, a voyage of three months' duration, traversing a rugged and mountainous country covered with deep snow, in order to keep up a good understanding with the strong and turbulent tribes inhabiting the south branch, where some of his former years had been spent.

These roving and hostile bands, inhabiting the borders of the great Snake country, still infested the communication, and held a valuable key of trade; but invariably continued hostile to the whites. At that severe season they are generally scattered about in small bands, and as it is much easier to gain on a few than on a multitude, he visited them all, and succeeded beyond expectation. In M'Millan's wintering ground everything went on in its usual successful train. But nothing happened in that old beaten path to elicit our notice, so that we now turn back to the north again.

Soon after my arrival from Canoe River, I was invited by the chiefs of my post to accompany a party of the natives on a bear-hunting expedition for a few days. On these occasions, they feel flattered by their trader accompanying them. The party were all mounted on horseback, to the number of seventy-three, and exhibited a fine display of horsemanship. After some ten miles' travel, we commenced operations. Having reached the hunting-ground the party separated into several divisions. We then perambulated the woods, crossed rivers, surrounded thickets, and scampered over hill and dale, with yell and song, for the greater part of two days; during which time we killed seven bears, nine wolves, and eleven small deer: one of the former I had the good luck to shoot myself. In the evening of the third day, however, our sport was checked by an accident. One of the great men, the chief Pacha of the hunting party, named Tu-tack-it, Is-tso-augh-an, or Short Legs, got severely wounded by a female bear.

The only danger to be apprehended in these savage excursions is by following the wounded animal into a thicket, or hiding-place; but with the Indians the more danger the more honour, and some of them are foolhardy enough to run every hazard in order to strike the last fatal blow, (in which the honour lies,) sometimes with a lance, tomahawk, or knife, at the risk of their lives. No sooner is a bear wounded than it immediately flies for refuge to some hiding-place, unless too closely pursued; in which case, it turns round in savage fury on its pursuers, and woe awaits whoever is in the way.

The bear in question had been wounded and took shelter in a small coppice; the bush was instantly surrounded by the horsemen, when the more bold and daring entered it on foot, armed with gun, knife, and tomahawk. Among the bushrecreation. You can take your gun on your back; you can instruct your family, or improve yourself in reading and reflection; you can enjoy the pleasures of religion to better advantage, serve your God to more perfection, and be a far better Christian, than were your lot cast in the midst of the temptations of a busy world.

Confining our remarks to the simple and uniform duties of a trading-post, activity of body, prudence, and forethought, are qualifications more in request than talent. In trade, as in war, there are gains and losses, advantages and disadvantages, to be kept in view, to guide one's conduct; and, generally speaking, the master of a department, district, or post, lives a busy and active life; and, although in a manner secluded from the eye of the world, yet he is just as interested and ambitious to distinguish himself in his sphere of life, as if continually under the eye of a scrutinising superior; for, if he once loses his character, through negligence or impropriety of conduct, it is here tenfold harder for him to regain confidence than in any employment elsewhere. The apprehension of this alone is a great check against misconduct.

The usual time for mustering all hands at head quarters being now arrived, the different parties throughout the interior, after assembling at the forts, made the best of their way to the emporium of the far west, and met at Fort George on the 5th day of June, 1818.

## CHAPTER VI.

Vacillating conduct at Fort George—Decision at head quarters—Fort Nez Percés—My own appointment—Fort George board of management—Departure of brigade—Wallawalla—Departure of our friends—Forlorn hope—Conduct of the Indians—Chilling reception—The natives' conduct towards the whites—Description of the place—Difficulties—Manœuvring of the whites—Resolutions of the Indians—Non-intercourse—Reconciliation—Tum-a-tap-um and his warriors—The chief's views—The great council—The ceremony of smoking—Natives yield—Whites gain their views—The selfish chief—Negotiation concluded—Favourable aspect—First Snake expedition—My own situation—Neighbouring tribes—Favourable change—Discouraging rumours—Oskonoton's story and fate—Conduct of the Iroquois—Natives murdered—Cowlitz expedition fails—The effect—The offended chief—Cruelties—How-how's conduct—Princess How-how—The marriage—The skirmish—Alarm—Confusion—How-how's departure—Wallamitte quarter—Conduct of the trappers—Cruelties—Wallamitte expedition—The effect—M'Kenzie's arrival—His adventures—Prospects in the Snake country—Animals—Lewis River explored—M'Kenzie and his two men—Kitson's adventures—Horses stolen—The clean sweep—The pursuit—The affray—A Snake shot—An Iroquois wounded—Horses recovered—Thieves caught—Arrival at M'Kenzie's camp—Snake returns—Two whites murdered—Result of Snake expedition—Favourable prospects—Conclusion.

At the sitting of the Fort George board of management, in the preceding year, an inclination was manifested to encourage the change of system, agreeably to the minutes of council at head quarters. From the feeling at the time much was expected, but nothing was realised; for, practically, that disposition was rendered abortive by subsequent arrangements.

At head quarters, however, the council of Fort William, this year, took a decisive step, that set all the vacillating measures of the managers at Fort George on one side; they ordered one hundred men to be at M'Kenzie's disposal for the more effectually carrying out his measures, and that a Fort, or Trading Station, should be erected among the Nez Percés Indians: being more central for the general business of the interior than that of Spokane House, it should be forthwith established there; and I was appointed to take charge of that important depôt. To these resolutions was appended a sharp reproof for the delays during the two preceding years.

The Fort George board of management had now no choice but to acquiesce in the decision of the council at head quarters. The managers bit their lips, and were silent. Men were provided, and means also; and a new feature imparted to the order of things generally.

The council having sat, the brigade for the interior left Fort George, and reached, without accident or hindrance, after a short and prosperous voyage, the Wallawalla, near the confluence of the two great branches of the Columbia, on the 11th of July. On that day, M'Kenzie, myself, and ninety-five effective men, encamped on the site pitched upon for the new establishment of Fort Nez Percés, about half a mile from the mouth of the little river Wallawalla.

There our friends left us as a forlorn hope, and proceeded on their journey to their several destinations. And, having before fully explained the customary mode of voyaging, we shall now direct the attention of our readers to the operations in this new quarter; occasionally glancing at other parts, as circumstances may require.

But before doing so, we must, in the first place, give a brief description of the place itself, with such other remarks as may occasionally suggest themselves. And, secondly, present the reader with an account of our reception by the natives of the place, and the almost insurmountable difficulties we had to encounter, before we could bring about a full reconciliation with the turbulent and high-minded Indians by whom we were surrounded.

On reaching the place, instead of advancing to meet us at the water's edge, as friends, on making for the shore, the Indians, as if with one accord, withdrew to their camp. Not a friendly hand was stretched out; not the least joy, usual among Indians on such occasions, was testified, to invite or welcome our arrival. These ceremonies, though trifling in themselves, are a very good indication of the reception likely to be met with; and, in the present case, their total absence could only be considered as very unfavourable.

Shy and silent, they sat on the mounds, at some distance from us, wrapped in their robes of dignity, observing a studied indifference. Even the little copper-coloured bantlings were heard to say, "What do the white people want here? Are they going to kill more of our relations?" alluding to some former occurrences there. Others again would remark, "We must not go near them, because they will kill us." While all this was going on, we kept a sharp look out. The principal chief of the camp, instead of coming to us, walked round and round the assembled crowd, urging the Indians to the observance of a non-intercourse, until the whites had made them presents. Hints were given us that property would purchase a footing.

In the whole land, this spot was among the most difficult—the most barren of materials for building; and as it was no common scheme, the same appeared to ordinary minds as a thing more wild than practicable. But plans had been formed; the country must be secured; the natives awed and reconciled; buildings made; furs collected; new territories added. Objections were not to be entertained: no obstacles were to be seen. We were to occupy the position. So on the dreaded spot we took up our stand, to run every hazard, and brave every danger.

The site was remarkable among the natives, as being the ground on which, some years before, Lewis and Clarke, of the American exploring expedition, ratified, according to Indian report, a general peace between themselves and the tribes of the adjacent country by the celebration of feasting and dancing for several days. It was rendered remarkable as a spot on which difficulties already noticed had taken place between the whites and the natives. And it was rendered still more remarkable, as being considered the most hostile spot on the whole line of communication. A place which the whites, it was said, could never hold with safety. The Nez Percés Fort was, however, marked out, on a level, upon the east bank of the Columbia, forming something like an island in the flood, and, by means of a tributary stream, a peninsula at low water.

The place selected was commanding. On the west is a spacious view of our noble stream in all its grandeur, resembling a lake rather than a river, and confined on the opposite shore by verdant hills of moderate height. On the north and east the sight is fatigued by the uniformity and wide expanse of boundless plains. On the south the prospect is romantic, being abruptly checked by a striking contrast of wild hills and rugged bluffs on either side of the water, and rendered more picturesque by two singular towering rocks, similar in colour, shape and height, called by the natives "The Twins," situated on the east side; these are skirted in the distance by a chain of the Blue Mountains, lying in the direction of east and west. To effect the intended footing on this sterile and precarious spot was certainly a task replete with excessive labour and anxiety.

In the charming serenity of a temperate atmosphere, Nature here displays her manifold beauties; and, at this season, the crowds of moving bodies diversify and enliven the scene. Groups of Indian huts, with their little spiral columns of smoke, and herds of animals, give animation and beauty to the landscape. The natives, in social crowds, vied with each other in coursing their gallant steeds, in racing, swimming, and other feats of activity. Wild horses, in droves, sported and grazed along the boundless plains; the wild fowl, in flocks, filled the air; and the salmon and sturgeon, incessantly leaping, ruffled the smoothness of the waters. The appearance of the country on a summer's evening was delightful beyond description.

Yet, with all these attractions around us, we were far from being free from anxiety. The natives flocked about us in very suspicious numbers; often through curiosity, to see our work; yet not at all times too well disposed. Our situation was the more irksome, as we depended for food on the success of trade, and on our standing well or ill with the Indians.

By far the greater part of the timber had to be collected in the bush, and conducted by water the distance of a hundred miles: not a tree nor shrub was on the spot! Divisions of our party, consequently, took place more frequently than was desirable; and our situation was ever exposed.

We had also to devise means to divert the attention and amuse the curiosity of the natives. Being composed of different tribes, the seeds of dissension were artfully sown among them, to hold the balance equal, and prevent their uniting against us: each tribe imagined it possessed the pre-eminence in our consideration; and though they were as independent of us as we were the reverse of them, still they were taught to fancy that they could not do without us.

Soon after our landing the tribes began to muster rapidly; the multitudes which surrounded us became immense, and their movements alarming. They insisted on our paying for the timber we were collecting. They prohibited our hunting and fishing. They affixed an exorbitant price of their own to every article of trade, and they insulted any of the hands whom they met alone. Thus they resolved to keep us in their power, and withhold supplies until their conditions were granted.

Not knowing, therefore, how affairs might terminate, all work was suspended. We stood on our guard; and an entire system of non-intercourse between us, of necessity, took place for five long summer days, although we were at the time on very short allowance. One night all hands went to rest supperless! All this time the natives were mustering fast, plotting and planning. Our numbers, however, being collected, they consisted of twenty-five Canadians, thirty-two Owhyhees, and thirty-eight Iroquois; and as a temporary inclosure had been put together, we assumed a posture of independence and of defence.

The natives were offered such terms as were given in other parts of the country—that they should have the choice of cultivating a peaceable understanding with us, and might profit by a friendly intercourse, or be certain to undergo the vengeance of all the whites, and ever after be deprived of the benefit resulting from a trade established among them. In the meantime, while they were deliberating among themselves, we were making every preparation for action.

Arguments enforced at the muzzles of our guns they could not, it seemed, withstand; and, fortunately, the chiefs advanced to bring matters to an accommodation. Still they insisted, as a preliminary step, that we should bestow a liberal present on all the multitude around us, to reconcile them to the measure. All the property we had would scarcely have been a mite to each! We, therefore, peremptorily refused. Their demands grew less and less, as they saw us determined. They were compelled at last to submit to every condition, even the most minute; and we were left to our own discretion. After these troubles, which occupied many anxious days and sleepless nights, all again became calm.

A trade with the natives now went on very briskly. Our people went to their work as usual; and we enjoyed for a time the comforts of peace and tranquillity. These enjoyments were, however, of short duration. True, we had obtained a footing on the ground, and things in general wore an aspect of peace; but something else remained to be done before we could effect the object we had in view.

The principal cause which led to the establishing of this post was the extension of the trade; consequently, the next step was to pave the way for discoveries. To this end, it was indispensable to the safety of the undertaking to have an understanding with the chief tribes, who, at all seasons, infested the most practicable passes in the contemplated direction, which was overspread with the horrors of war; for seeing the natives extremely formidable, we apprehended that they might be unanimous to prevent our advancing to trade with their enemies.

With a view to effect this important point, the chiefs and wise men of the different tribes were called together. They met. An endless round of ceremony took place among them, during their discussion: yet nothing could be finally settled, on account of the absence of one of the principal chiefs at the war, in the very quarter we had our eye upon. We considered his absence a great drawback on our proceedings, as he professed himself a sincere friend to the whites: we, therefore, placed our chief reliance on his influence and good offices.

For ten days our patience was put to the stretch by the intrigues of the many who busied themselves in thwarting our object. But while we were thus entangled in endless efforts to secure a peace, who should arrive but Tum-a-tap-um, the regretted chief. We now hoped that the business would be speedily and amicably settled. But new difficulties presented themselves. Instead of Tum-a-tap-um coming to join the assembled conclave to forward our business, all the great men deserted us to join him with his trophies of war, and left us mere spectators to wait their convenience.

The arrival of the war-party left us without either chief or slave to consult; and for three days we had to wait, until they had exhausted their songs of triumph, without one single interview with the chief on whom we had placed so much confidence. This war-party was reported to us to consist of four hundred and eighty men. They had a very imposing appearance on their arrival. Their hideous yells, mangled prisoners, and bloody scalps, together with their barbarous gestures, presented a sight truly savage. I only saw nine slaves. On the third day, Tum-a-tap-um, mounted on horseback, rode backwards and forwards round our little camp several times, without expressing either approbation or disapprobation of our measures. Then dismounting, and drawing near to us, with his men around him, they smoked some hundreds of pipes of our tobacco. The ceremony of smoking being over, we had a long conversation with him on the subject of a general peace; but he was so elated with his own exploits, and the success of his late war expedition, that we fancied him not so warmly interested in our cause as formerly.

Notwithstanding reiterated professions of friendship, it was observed that his disposition was uncommonly selfish. He never opened his mouth, but to insist on our goods being lavished on his numerous train of followers, without the least compensation: the more he received, the more his assurance increased, and his demands had no bounds.

The natives were now to be seen clubbed together in groups; counselling went on day and night, and as all savage tribes delight in war, it was no easy matter to turn their attention to peace. However, it was so managed, that they were all induced to meet again on the subject. "If," said Tum-a-tap-um, "we make peace, how shall I employ my young men? They delight in nothing but war: and besides, our enemies the Snakes never observe a peace." Then turning round, "Look," said he again, pointing to his slaves, scalps, and arms, "am I to throw all these trophies away? Shall Tum-a-tap-um forget the glory of his forefathers, and become a woman?" Quahat, the Cayouse great war chief, next got up, and observed, "Will the whites, in opening a trade with our enemies, promise not to give them guns or balls?" Others spoke to the same effect. We tried to combat these remarks by expatiating on the blessings of peace and the comforts of trade; but several meetings took place before we could accomplish the desired object.

At length a messenger came with notice that the chiefs were all of one mind, and would present themselves in a short time. All our people were placed under arms; nominally to honour their reception, but really to guard ourselves. By-and-by, the solemn train of chiefs, warriors, and other great personages were seen to move from the camp in procession, painted, dressed in their state and war garments, and armed. They entered our inclosure to the number of fifty-six, where a place had been appropriately fitted up for the occasion. The most profound silence pervaded the whole, until the pipe of peace had six times performed the circle of the assembly.

The scene was in the highest degree interesting. The matter was canvassed anew. Nothing appeared to be overlooked or neglected. The opinion of each was delivered briefly, with judgment, and with candour, and to the same end. Satisfied with the answers and the statements we had given, at sunset, peace between themselves and the Snakes was decreed on the spot, and a unanimous consent given for us to pass and repass unmolested. Then they threw down their war garments into the midst of the circle, as if to say, "We have no further need of these garments." This manœuvre had a double meaning. It was a broad hint for a new suit, as well as a peace-offering! The pipe of peace finally ratified the treaty. Then all shaking hands, according to the manner of the whites, parted friends; both parties apparently pleased with the result.

One condition of the treaty was, that we should use our influence to bring the Snakes to agree to the peace; for without that, it would be useless to ourselves. The only real object we had in view, or the only result that could in reality be expected by the peace, was, that we might be enabled to go in and come out of the Snake country in safety, sheltered under the influence of its name. Nothing beyond this was ever contemplated on our part. All our manœuvres were governed by the policy of gain. Peace in reality was beyond our power; it was but an empty name.

Does the reader ask, "Could the puny arm of a few whites, were they sincere, have brought about a peace between these two great and warlike nations, situated as they are?" I answer, "No." Does he ask, "Did Lewis and Clarke conclude a peace between them?" I again answer, "No." Does he inquire, "Can a solid peace be concluded between them, either by themselves, or by the influence of their traders?" I repeat, "No." Does he again inquire, "Is such a thing practicable, as a solid peace being concluded and observed between two savage nations, brought up in war?" I say, "No!" Such a thing is a perfect delusion. They must either be civilised, or one of them extirpated; then there may be peace, but not till then.

As soon as the great conference of peace was over, our men were set to their work, for the third time, and we now opened a trade with the natives, which was carried on briskly, particularly in provisions and pack-horses, for the contemplated journey across the Blue Mountains. In a few days, we procured two hundred and eighty horses, a number answerable to the different purposes of travelling, hunting, and exploring in the new and distant countries inhabited by the Snakes and other nations to the south. This brings us to the first Snake expedition.

The expedition was composed of fifty-five men of all denominations, one hundred and ninety-five horses, and three hundred beaver traps, besides a considerable stock of merchandise; but depending on the chances of the chace, they set out without provisions or stores of any kind. The season was too far advanced for the plan to be successful.

The party took their departure at the end of September, in the full view and amid the cheers of all the natives. Turning his back, therefore, upon the rest of his extensive charge, with all its ease and fruits of comfort, M'Kenzie, without any second or friend in whom he could confide, placed himself at the head of this medley, to suffer new hardships, and face new dangers, in the precarious adventure.

The charge of the important establishment, Fort Nez Percés, with all its cares, now devolved upon me, with the remnant of the people. And as we have already given a description of the place, and noticed our reception among the natives, we shall here, by way of variety, present the reader with a brief list of the names of the tribes which inhabit this part of the country.

When the first traders arrived in the country, they generally distinguished all the natives along this part of the commmunication indiscriminately by the appellation of "Nez Percés," or pierced noses, from the custom practised by these people of having their noses bored, to hold a certain white shell like the fluke of an anchor. The appellation was used until we had an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with their respective names. It was, therefore, from this cause that the present establishment derived its name.

The different tribes attached to Fort Nez Percés, and who formerly went by that cognomen, are the Sha-moo-in-augh, Skam-nam-in-augh, E'yack-im-ah, Is-pipe-whum-augh, and In-as-petsum. These tribes inhabit the main north branch above the Forks. On the south branch, are the Pallet-to Pallas, Shaw-ha-ap-ten, or Nez Percés proper, Paw-luch, and Cosis-pa tribes. On the main Columbia, beginning at the Dalles, are the Ne-coot-im-eigh, Wiss-co-pam, Wiss-whams, Way-yam-pams, Low-him, Saw-paw, and You-ma-talla-bands. And about the establishment, the Cayouse and Wallawalla tribes. It is to the two latter that the spot appertains on which the fort is erected, who are consequently resident in the immediate neighbourhood. The Shaw-ha-ap-ten and the Cayouse nations, are, however, by far the most powerful and warlike of all these different tribes.

The two last mentioned regulate all the movements of the others, in peace and war. And as they stand, well or ill disposed towards their traders, so do the others. It is, therefore, the interest of the whites to keep on a friendly footing with them, which it is not at all times easy to do. They are, however, fast changing, and at times their conduct would almost encourage a belief that they are everything we could wish. Judging from these favourable intervals, a stranger would conclude that no part of the country could be more tranquil or peaceable than this quarter, once so terrible; but a little knowledge of their history would soon convince him that although they often put on a fair outside, all is not right within. We hoped that things were getting gradually better, for the men of the place occasionally moved about with property, in groups of two or three at a time; and during my lonely strolls in the environs, for the purpose of shooting, I fell in with bands who were suspicious looking, yet they never failed to accost me in the most respectful and best-natured manner. These circumstances augur favourably for the future. It will, nevertheless, be the work of years, perhaps of a generation, before civilisation can manifest its influence over their actions.

The circumstance which caused our chief uneasiness arose from the frequency of unpleasant rumours, which obtained currency among the natives of the place, that our absent friends had met with a total discomfiture from the Snake nation. Indeed, so probable did their statements seem, that they appeared no longer doubtful. The Indians being in the habit of viewing everything in that direction in the worst light, it was only natural they should place implicit belief in whatever they heard from those of their own nation about the frontiers.

At the time of these distracting reports, a man by the name of Oskononton, an Iroquois, belonging to the Snake expedition, suddenly arrived at the Fort. His haggard appearance showed that he had suffered no ordinary hardships. After taking some refreshment and a little rest, for he was reduced to a skeleton, he related to me the story of his adventures. And I shall give it in his own words. "After crossing the Blue Mountains," said Oskononton, "where we had got some distance into the Snake country, my comrades, to the number of twenty-five, teased Mr. M'Kenzie to allow us to hunt and trap in a small river which appeared well stocked in beaver. At last he reluctantly consented, and we remained; well knowing that if he had not done so, the Iroquois would have deserted. This was their plan. After the parties had separated, and Mr. M'Kenzie and the main party had left us, we set to trapping and were very successful; but had not been long there, when we fell in with a small band of Snakes. My comrades began to exchange their horses, their guns, and their traps with these people for women, and carried on the traffic to such an extent that they had scarcely an article left; then being no longer able to hunt, they abandoned themselves with the savages, and were doing nothing.

"Unable to check their heedless conduct, I left them, and set out to follow the main party; but I lost my way, and getting bewildered, turned back again to join my comrades. Then I tried and tried again to persuade them to mind their hunting; but in vain. So I left them again, and set out on my way back to this place; but on the second day after leaving my associates, I observed, at some little distance, a war-party, and hid myself. Fearing that my horse might discover my retreat to my enemies, I resolved to kill it; a resolution I executed with the utmost regret. Although game was plentiful in those parts, yet I dared not shoot, as the report of my gun might have led to my discovery in a place frequented only by enemies. As soon as the war-party passed on, I cut and dried part of my dead horse for food, and tying it up in a bundle, continued my journey.

"One day, as I was entering the Blue Mountains, I perceived several horsemen in full pursuit making after me; seeing there was not a moment to lose, I threw my bundle, provisions and all, into a bush, ran down a steep bank, plunged into the water (a small river happening to be near), and hid myself beneath some drift-wood, my head only out of the water, which fortunately was not very cold. The horsemen paraded up and down both sides of the little stream for some time, and then dismounting, made a fire, had something to eat, and remained for more than two hours within fifty yards of my hiding place. They were Snakes. After dark, I got out of the water more dead than alive. I then went to look for my provisions, my bag, and my little property, which I had thrown into the bush; but the night being dark, and I afraid to remain any longer, I set out as fast as I could on my journey without finding anything. Every moment I thought I heard a noise behind me: every branch that broke under my feet, or beast of prey that started, convinced me, in spite of my senses, that I was still pursued. In this state of alarm, I passed the night, but made very little headway. In the morning I took to another hiding-place: tired and exhausted, I laid myself down to sleep, without covering, without fire, an without either food or water. In this manner, travelling in the night, and hiding during the day, I crossed the Blue Mountains, which took me three days. For the most of that time I had not a shoe on my feet; neither had I gun, fire-steel, nor anything to render travelling comfortable. By this time, my feet had got swelled and blistered with walking, so that I took three days more between this and the mountains; making the seventh day that I had not tasted food of any kind, with the exception of a few raw roots." This ended Oskononton's story.

I had no difficulty in believing the statement of the Iroquois. It was in accordance with their general character. Oskononton, as his story relates, knew nothing of the main party; so that I was left in the dark as to its fate. After keeping the poor fellow upwards of three weeks to recruit his health and recover his strength, I sent him on to Fort George; and this brings us to notice the passing events in that quarter.

Just at the time of Oskononton's arrival at that place, a party of his countrymen were fitting out for a hunting and trapping expedition to the Cowlitz quarter, and he unfortunately joined it. The party, however, had not been long there, before they got into trouble with the natives, and in an affray, poor Oskononton, in trying to rescue one of his companions, was murdered. After this tragical affair, in which it was stated our trappers were the aggressors, the Iroquois had to make a precipitate retreat, abandon their hunting-ground, and make the best of their way back again to Fort George.

The Iroquois had no sooner returned than they gave Mr. Keith to understand that the Indians had, without the least provocation, killed one of their party and wounded two others. A deed so atrocious, and a story so plausible, had its effect at Fort George. Placing, therefore, implicit faith in the report of the Iroquois, Mr. Keith, with a view to investigate the matter, punish the murderers, and settle the affair, fitted out, without delay, a party of between thirty and forty men, chiefly Iroquois—the very worst men in the world for such a business—and gave the charge to Mr. Ogden, an experienced clerk of the north-west school. On reaching the Cowlitz, all their inquiries were fruitless; they could find no offenders, until they got the assistance of How-How, one of the principal chiefs of the place, who conducted them to the very spot, little thinking that he would have cause to regret his friendly assistance.

In their approaches to the Indians, Mr. Ogden cautioned the Iroquois to be guarded in their conduct, and do nothing until he first showed them the example; some then went one way, some another, making their way through the thickets and bushes. But a party of the Iroquois, happened to reach the Indian tents before Mr. Ogden, and instead of waiting for orders, or ascertaining whether those they had found were or were not the guilty persons, the moment they got within gun-shot of the Indians they fired on all they saw; and before Mr. Ogden or How-How could interpose, twelve persons, men, women, and children, were killed. Nor is it known to this day who were the guilty persons! Even after Mr. Ogden had arrived, and tried to stop them, one more was shot; and, to crown their guilt, our people scalped three of their victims.

The quarrel in which Oskononton lost his life arose from our trappers interfering with the Indian women, which brought down on them the vengeance of the men, and ended in bloodshed. The moment How-How saw the outrage committed on his people, he wheeled about in disgust, and left the party. The whites had now to make a hasty retreat, before the neighbouring Indians had time to assemble; and got back to head quarters with speed, carrying along with them several scalps, which they exhibited on poles, as trophies of victory: they even danced with those trophies in the square of Fort George, after their return! Anticipating, no doubt, a similar result from the Cowlitz quarter, to that which followed the Wallamitte embassy the year before, Mr. Keith was horror-struck at the cruelties perpetrated on the natives.

Every stratagem that experience could devise, or hope inspire, was now resorted to, in order to induce How-How, the Cowlitz chief, to pay a visit to Fort George; in order that a secure footing might once more be obtained in the Cowlitz quarter. The

Chinooks, to be sure, were in his way—they were his enemies; but what of that? The whites were his friends. He was promised ample protection, and a safe return cordially pledged. But he would listen to nothing: How-How was immovable.

At last, however, it was discovered that How-How had a daughter, both lovely and fair; the flower of her tribe! Princess How-How was admired. Her ochre cheeks were delicate, her features incomparable; and her dress surpassed in lustre her person: her robes were the first in the land; her feathers, her bells, her rattles, were unique; while the tint of her skin, her nose-bob, girdle, and gait, were irresistible! A husband of high rank had to be provided for the Princess How-How, and Prince How-How himself was formally acquainted with the wishes and anticipations of the whites. This appeal the sagacious and calculating chief could not resist. How-How therefore, with his fascinating daughter and train of followers, arrived in their robes of state at head quarters. The bridal-dress was beyond compare! Prince How-How now became the father-in-law of a white chief, and a fur-trader became the happy son-in-law of Prince How-How.

We need scarcely mention here that the happy couple were joined together in holy matrimony on the first of April! After the marriage-ceremony, a peace was negotiated with How-How—this was the main point; and the chief prepared for his homeward journey, in order to pave the way for our trappers and hunters to return again to the Cowlitz.

But just as he and his followers were starting, a sad blunder was committed by the whites. It would appear that measures for their safety had either been overlooked or neglected; and after all the courtesy that had been shown the great man, he left the fort unguarded; he had not advanced three hundred yards from the gate, before he and his people were partially intercepted by some skulking Chinooks, who waylaid and fired upon them. How-How, instead of retreating back to the fort for protection, boldly called out to his men to face their enemies, and stand their ground. But the Chinooks being concealed, How-How's men could see nobody to fire at; so they immediately posted themselves behind trees. In the skirmish, a ball happened to strike the fort; and whether a shot is fired accidentally or by design, the event is equally alarming. The moment, therefore, the ball struck, the sentinel gave the alarm, by calling out, "The fort is attacked! How-How and his men are in ambush!" In the confusion of the moment, and only How-How's party being seen, the first impression, although exceedingly improbable, was, that How-How himself had proved treacherous, and, on his departure, had fired upon the fort. Orders were, therefore, immediately issued to fire the bastion guns, by which one of How-How's men was severely, and another slightly, wounded. At the same time, all the people, who had been at work outside the fort, came rushing in; and, meeting parties in the square running to and fro in every direction, collecting arms and ammunition, much confusion ensued.

How-How and his party now stood between two fires; and, apprehending treachery on the part of the whites, were preparing to make a rush, and force their way through the Chinooks, to save themselves. But, by this time, the people who had entered the fort had time to set matters right, by giving information that the Chinooks had been lying in ambush, and first fired upon How-How; and that How-How was only defending himself. In the bustle and uproar of the moment, however, some time elapsed before men taken by surprise could reflect, or understand each other. The moment the shots were fired from the bastion, the Chinooks fled; thinking, as a matter of course, that they only had been fired at. As soon, therefore, as the whites ceased firing, all was over; and the whole was only the work of a few minutes. How-How was now brought into the fort, and the misunderstanding fully explained to him. But he was a changed man. On his part, the habits of familiarity and friendship ceased; he was stern and sulky: notwithstanding the praises that were bestowed on him, yet his pride was wounded, and he remained sullen and thoughtful. When he ultimately took his departure, after receiving many presents and more promises, his fidelity was evidently shaken, and his future support problematical.

The only field that now remained open for our trappers and hunters, as the Cowlitz could not be depended upon, was the Wallamitte; and to that quarter the thoughts of all were directed. Notwithstanding a sufficient number of trappers and hunters were occupied there already, yet all those who had been driven from the northern quarter now bent their course to the southern, to join those already there. From the general conduct of the Iroquois among the natives, it would have been better policy to have sent them all out of the country; distracting, as they did, the natives, destroying the trade, and disgracing the whites.

The party, numbering in all sixty men, and headed by two half-bred clerks from Canada, proceeded up the Wallamitte, until they had reached its source; and from thence, crossing some high ridges of land, hunted on the banks of the Umpqua, where they discovered many branches which promised a rich harvest of furs. Here our people fell in with numerous bands of the natives, who were all very peaceable; but, from their shy and reserved manners, and wishing to avoid the whites, it was evident that they had never been much in the habit of trading with them. Yet they made no objection to our people's hunting on their lands. The traders wished to traffic, barter in furs, and to exchange horses with them; they also wished to get wives from them: in short, they wished to play the same game with them as the Iroquois, according to Oskononton's story, played with the Snakes; but no inducement, no advances, could bring those natives into contact or familiarity with our people. The further the traders advanced, the further the Indians receded to avoid them; when, seeing the natives timid and distant, our people resorted to threats.

One day, while the Indians were raising camp, our people wished to detain some of their horses, as hostages, to ensure their return. The Indians resisted; and the hunters, in a moment of rashness, fired upon them. It was found that no less a number than fourteen of the innocent and inoffensive Indians were slaughtered on the spot, and that without a single arrow being shot in self-defence. The survivors fled, followed up by the hunters; but the number that fell in the flight was not ascertained.

Fear now seized the party, and a retreat followed. They fell back on the Wallamitte, and communicating their fears to the other trappers, all left the hunting-ground, in a panic, and drew near to head quarters. From the Wallamitte Falls four men of their party and an Indian were dispatched to Fort George, with accounts of what had happened, giving a very plausible colouring of the whole affair in their own favour. These men, while on their way thither, had encamped at a place called

Oak Point, within twenty miles of the fort; and were all, with the exception of the Indian, barbarously murdered one night, while asleep! The deed was committed by five of the Class-can-eye-ah tribe: the same band who had murdered the three white men belonging to the Pacific Fur Company in 1811. This atrocious act of cruelty, taking place at the very gates of our stronghold, proved that the state of things was getting worse.

The whites called aloud for revenge; an example was necessary. Three parties, composed of a mixture of whites and natives, were sent in pursuit of the murderers. They were found out, and seized, and four out of the five, after a trial of some length, were convicted, and punished with death. The disasters of this year, in the Fort George district alone, it was supposed, had reduced our annual returns four thousand beaver, equal to 6000*l.* sterling. And the dire effects produced on the natives, by the reckless conduct of our people, took years to efface.

Leaving Fort George, we now return to the Nez Percés quarter. We shall, in the first place, notice what effect the troubles at the former quarter had on the latter. The disasters in the Cowlitz had not only shut us out from that hunting-ground, but prevented our trappers from proceeding across the ridge, in the E'yak-im-a direction; for a party I had fitted out were frightened, as soon as they crossed the height of land, by the hostility manifested towards them, and had, in consequence, to retrace their steps. They were, nevertheless, considering the short time they had been there, very successful.

It is, perhaps, not generally known that the most direct line of communication from the Grand Forks to the ocean is by the river E'yak-im-a; and although the portage across the dividing ridge, from that river on the east to the Chikelis River on the west, is considerable, yet the land-carriage is no object in a place where the road is not bad and the means of transport abundant; horses being everywhere plentiful. All the resources of the interior might, therefore, with great facility, be conveyed, through this channel, to Puget's Sound, independent of the main Columbia; should the fate of war, at any time, offer obstacles to the free ingress and egress to the river itself; or should the intricate and dangerous channel across the bar at its mouth get choked up, as it sometimes does, to a very great degree, with sand-banks. By the E'yak-im-a road, the natives reach the ocean in ten days.

At this period of our anxiety, and our declining hopes as to the fate of our friends in the Snake country, who should appear, to remove suspicion and give new vigour to our proceedings, but M'Kenzie, from his voyage of discovery. He and six men reached Fort Nez Percés on snow-shoes, with their blankets on their backs, in good health and spirits, after a tedious journey of six months. The meeting was one of interest, for M'Kenzie was no less cheered to find everything safe and our footing sure at this place, than I was to witness his safe return under favourable circumstances, after so many discouraging rumours. The accounts M'Kenzie gave of the Snake country were flattering, the prospects encouraging; but the character of his people was the very reverse. We shall, however, let him speak for himself.

"After leaving this place last fall," said M'Kenzie, "we directed our course across the Blue Mountains; but had not proceeded far into the country of the Snakes, before the Iroquois began their old trade of plotting mischief; but, being less numerous and more cowardly than their associates, they did not avow their treacherous intentions publicly. I was, however, fully aware of their designs, and guarded against them, but could not change their dispositions nor their heedless conduct; and fearing lest they might desert, or do something worse, if in their power, I made a virtue of necessity and acquiesced in their wishes; thinking it better policy to do so than drag them along discontented, to desert or abandon themselves with the Indians whenever an opportunity offered. So I put the best face on things I could, fitted them out well in everything they required, and with the rest of the party proceeded on our journey, leaving them to work beaver in the rich little river Skam-naugh.

From this place we advanced, suffering occasionally from alarms for twenty-five days, and then found ourselves in a rich field of beaver, in the country lying between the great south branch and the Spanish waters; but the natives in these parts were not friendly. In our journey, we fell in with several bands of the Snake nation, and to each we communicated the welcome tidings of peace, on the part of the Nez Percés; to which they, one and all, responded in the language of gratitude: for everything new attracts their attention, and the word 'peace' served as our letter of introduction among them. 'Our wishes,' said they, 'are now accomplished: nothing so desirable to us as peace.' I hope the impression may be a lasting one.

"After disposing of my people to the best advantage, trading with the natives, and securing the different chiefs to our interest, I left my people at the end of four months. Then taking a circuitous route along the foot of the Rocky Mountains, a country extremely dreary during a winter voyage, I reached the head waters of the great south branch, regretting every step I made that we had been so long deprived of the riches of such a country. Thence I steered my course for the river Skam-naugh, where I had left my Iroquois to hunt beaver in October last. During this part of my journey, I crossed and re-crossed many parts I had seen in 1811. Instead, however, of finding the Iroquois together, and employed in hunting or in the pursuit of hunting, I found them by twos and by threes all over the country, living with the savages, without horses, without traps, without furs, and without clothing; perfectly destitute of everything I had given them. I left them, therefore, as I found them. Iroquois will never do in this country. In fact, their introduction was the signal of our disappointments. On reaching this place, we found but little snow in the Blue Mountains. During the last two months we have travelled upwards of six hundred miles on snow-shoes." This account confirmed Oskononton's story.

Continuing the narrative of his journey, our enterprising adventurer next went on to describe the country, the resources, and animals he everywhere met with. "On our outward journey," said M'Kenzie, "the surface was mountainous and rugged, and still more so on our way back. Woods and valleys, rocks and plains, rivers and ravines, alternately met us; but altogether it is a delightful country. There animals of every class rove about undisturbed; wherever there was a little plain, the red deer were seen grazing in herds about the rivers; round every other point were clusters of poplar and elder, and where there was a sapling, the ingenious and industrious beaver was at work. Otters sported in the eddies; the wolf and the fox were seen sauntering in quest of prey; now and then a few cypresses or stunted pines were met with on the rocky parts, and in their spreading tops the racoon sat secure. In the woods, the martin and black fox were numerous; the badger sat quietly looking from his mound; and in the numberless ravines, among bushes laden with fruits, the black, the brown, and the grisly bear were seen. The mountain sheep, and goat white as snow, browzed on the rocks and ridges; and the big horn species ran among the lofty cliffs. Eagles and vultures, of uncommon size, flew about the rivers. When we approached, most of these animals stood motionless; they would then move off a little distance, but soon came anew to satisfy a curiosity that often proved fatal to them.

"The report of a gun did not alarm them: they would give a frisk at each shot, and stand again; but when the flag was unfurled, being of a reddish hue, it was with apparent reluctance they would retire beyond the pleasing sight. Hordes of wild horses were likewise seen on this occasion; and of all the animals seen on our journey they were the wildest, for none of them could be approached: their scent is exceedingly keen, their hearing also; and in their curiosity they were never known to come at any time within gun-shot. One band of these contained more than two hundred. Some of them were browsing on the face of the hills; others were running like deer up and down the steeps; and some were galloping backwards and forwards on the brows of the sloping mountains, with their flowing manes and bushy tails streaming in the wind. Caverns without number are to be seen in the rocks, on either side of the river; many of them of very great depth and dimensions, and the shapes of the rocks were often picturesque. But on our way back, the scene was changed; it was dreary and forbidding winter; nothing was to be seen but leafless forests, and snow-clad hills, with scarcely an animal to attract attention, except a wolf or a fox which now and then crossed our path, or an eagle or vulture watching their prey about rapids, where open water was still to be seen. The animals had now retreated for shelter to the thick woods, so that we were more than once on short allowance; on these emergencies we had to regale ourselves on wolf's flesh, and were sometimes glad to get that to satisfy the cravings of hunger. We required no stimulants to sharpen our appetites."

M'Kenzie had a threefold object in view by leaving his people, and returning to this place at such a season: first, to see some of the principal Snake chiefs, whom he had not spoken with about the peace between them and the Nez Percés; secondly, to examine the country; and lastly, to ascertain the state of the navigation up the south branch, with a view to future operations. The two former of these objects were accomplished. The peace was settled as far as possible between parties living so remote from each other. The result, however, must ever be doubtful.

After a short respite of only seven days at Nez Percés, allowing himself scarcely time to repose and recount his adventures, this indefatigable man set out anew, through ice and snow, to examine the state of the navigation in the Snake country by the south branch. For this purpose, he and his handful of Canadians, six in number, embarking on board of a barge, left Fort Nez Percés, and proceeded up Lewis River. The turbulent natives on both sides the stream, notwithstanding his late return from their foes, suffered him to pass through this channel unmolested. After a voyage of two months, the boat, with four of the men, returned to this place; while M'Kenzie and the other two pushed forward on the precarious adventure of reaching the hunters, a distance of twenty days' travel, through a country where it had often been asserted that "less than fifty men could not set a foot with safety."

M'Kenzie's letter, by return of the boat, was dated, "Point Successful, Head of the Narrows, April 15th, 1819." He stated that, "The passage by water is now proved to be safe and practicable for loaded boats, without one single carrying place or portage; therefore, the doubtful question is set at rest for ever. Yet from the force of the current, and the frequency of rapids, it may still be advisable, and perhaps preferable, to continue the land transport, while the business in this quarter is carried on upon a small scale." He then goes on to observe, "We had often recourse to the line;" and then adds, "There are two places with bold cut rocks on either side the river, where the great body of water is compressed within a narrow compass, which may render those parts doubtful during the floods, owing to rocks and whirlpools; but there are only two, and neither of them are long." He then concludes his letter with these words, "I am now about to commence a very doubtful and dangerous undertaking, and shall, I fear, have to adopt the habits of the owl, roam in the night and skulk in the day, to avoid our enemies. But if my life is spared, I will be at the river Skam-naugh, with my people and returns, by the 5th of June. Hasten, therefore, the outfit, with some additional hands, if possible, to that place. A strong escort will be advisable, and caution the person you may send in charge, to be at all times, both day and night, on his guard."

After performing the annual trip to Fort George, the brigade, on its return to the interior, reached this place on the 15th of May: nearly a month earlier than usual. As soon, therefore, as the inlanders took their departure, I set about forwarding the Snake supplies. Accompanying the brigade was a small party of fifteen men, intended for the Snakes, to strengthen M'Kenzie's party. Augmenting this small party to the number of twenty-six from my own establishment, I placed the whole under the charge of a Mr. Kittson, an apprentice-clerk from Canada; a novice in the country, but a smart fellow. With all possible haste, Mr. Kittson and his men set off with the Snake outfit to meet M'Kenzie and his party at the river Skam-naugh, according to appointment. On the departure of the party, I handed Mr. Kittson written instructions, as he was a new hand, and cautioned him in every possible manner against the thieving propensities of the natives along the lines.

But Kittson, full of confidence and life, thought all this caution unnecessary, and swore that "all the Indians on the Continent would neither steal his horses nor anything else." "I am glad to hear it," said I. "Oh! I defy them," said he; and saying so, we shook hands and parted. The task and responsibility of venturing into a new and dangerous part of the country, among hostile savages, with loads of property, was a perilous undertaking for the most experienced person; much more so was it for a person like Kittson, a perfect stranger, and who had never received a charge of the kind before. Yet all went on well until the party had got to the territories of the Snakes; a ground which is ever exceedingly suspicious, as lying between two contending nations. Too much care could not be taken in keeping a sharp look out, none knowing when, or from which side, the danger might first show itself.

Seeing no traces of Indians, Mr. Kittson allowed himself to be influenced by the opinion of his men, ever ready to despise danger in order to avoid watching at night. The whole party, therefore, in full confidence and security, laid themselves down one night to enjoy the comforts of repose. In the darkness of the night, however, hearing neighing and a noise among the horses, the party started up, half asleep, half awake, and rushing to where they had been feeding, discovered the thieves in the act of unhobbling them; but in the darkness the villains got off, and in their retreat succeeded in carrying off twelve horses. The evil was now beyond remedy; though not fatal to the expedition, as there still remained enough to carry the property; but the men, as a just punishment for their negligence, had to trudge on foot.

From the encampment of the stolen horses, the party advanced, taking the utmost care to watch every night. One day, however, they found themselves in a beautiful open valley, skirted by mountains, and not seeing any natives—for these sly marauders are never to be seen—and as their horses were fagged, they were willing to let them graze for a few hours at large in the meadow, around their little camp. The party being fatigued, particularly those on foot, very inconsiderately laid themselves down, and in a few minutes they were overpowered with that heavy sleep which their wearied travelling so much demanded. They had not been long in this state, before a noise of "Hoo, hoo! hoo, hoo!" sounding in their ears, awoke them; when they found their horses were all gone.

Three of that banditti who at all seasons of the year infest the skirts of the frontiers on the Snake side, had been, as they always are, watching from the adjacent hills the movements of passengers; they had crawled and concealed themselves among the long grass, until they reached the horses, then laying hold of one each, they mounted, and driving the others before them, were beyond our people's reach before they could get their eyes well open!

No words can depict the anxiety of our little band, with much property on their hands, in an enemy's country, destitute of provisions, and deprived of hope itself! Two days and nights passed, and they had come to no decision; but on the third day, about noon, while they were pondering on the step they were next to take, a cloud of dust was seen approaching from afar. Concluding that the party must be enemies, they made a hasty breastwork with their goods, and, with their arms in their hands, waited their arrival in a state of anxious forbodings; what must have been their joy on seeing a party of our own hunters appear, driving before them the very horses which had been the cause of their unhappiness.

M'Kenzie, having arrived at the river Skamnaugh at the time appointed, and not meeting with either men or supplies from this place, as he expected, despatched ten men to ascertain the cause of the delay. Two days after these ten men had left their Bourgeois, in passing through a defile of the mountains they very unexpectedly met the thieves face to face; recognising the horses as belonging to the whites, and seeing the Indians take to flight to avoid them, they were confirmed in their conjectures, and accordingly determined on following them. The chace lasted for upwards of two hours, when the thieves, seeing their efforts to get off were fruitless, turned round in order to sell their lives as dearly as possible. In such rencontres among themselves life is generally forfeited; they therefore boldly faced their pursuers, although three times their number, and fought desperately while they had an arrow remaining. One of them was shot by our people, another was taken, and the third, although severely wounded, made his escape among the bushes. One of our hunters was wounded also. After the affray, the party wheeled about, and made for Kittson and his forlorn band, driving all the horses before them. It was their approach that caused the cloud of dust, already noticed; first so suspicious, and afterwards so pleasing.

Kittson's party, now augmented to six and thirty men, raised camp, and set out once more with lightsome hearts. Two days had not, however, passed over their heads, when they had another fright. While they were encamped one night on a small river, where everything around indicated security, two more horse thieves were detected in the night busy unhobbling their horses. In this instance, the people on watch were more fortunate; they got hold of them, and kept the rascals in safe custody until daylight; but the whites had suffered no loss, and therefore Mr. Kittson had the clemency to let them go unhurt. Each of the fellows had a quiver, containing from fifty to sixty arrows, several pairs of shoes, and long lines for securing horses.

The party had now reached that inauspicious spot where some of the unfortunate men belonging to Reid's party were murdered in 1813. There the cares of our people were not diminished at beholding some bands of banditti of the most suspicious appearance hovering about; but the whites, being on their guard, were allowed to pass unmolested.

Next day Mr. Kittson and party, after all their mishaps, arrived safely and in good spirits at the river Skam-naugh, and joined Mr. M'Kenzie with his whole band; for he had contrived to assemble and bring together the greater part of his wayward and perverse Iroquois. Here Kittson delivered over his charge, and receiving in return the Snake furs, bent his course back again to this place, where he arrived on the 7th July, 1819. On his way back, however, he had a very narrow escape from a war-party; but got off with the loss of only two men, who fell a sacrifice at the first onset of the savages.

Had not the troubles in the Fort George department diminished the usual quantity of furs there, we should have had, notwithstanding the defection of the Iroquois, a handsome augmentation to our returns this year. The Snake expedition turned out well; it made up for all deficiencies elsewhere, and gave a handsome surplus besides.

M'Kenzie's party was now augmented by the addition of Kittson and his men, who had no sooner delivered up the Snake furs at this place than they returned to join him. The natives and hunting-ground being also familiar to our hunters, were circumstances, as far as we could judge, that warranted our most sanguine anticipations as to the future. In his letter to me, M'Kenzie states, that, "although the natives are at present in a very unsettled state, yet if the contemplated peace succeeds, I hope that our success in this quarter next year will come up to the expectations of every reasonable man." With these remarks, we shall close the narrative for the present year.

## CHAPTER VII.

Perseverance rewarded—Change of policy—Kittson's return—Mode of building—Trading fort in the Indian countries—Fort Nez Percés—View of Fort Nez Percés—Change in the conduct of the natives—Our Snake friends—Precautions—M'Kenzie and his three men—Troublesome visitors—Perilous situation—A bold step—The powder-keg—Situation of the whites—Mysterious movement—The war-party—Manœuvres—Hopeless situation of the whites—Indian attempts fail—Departure of the war-party—Two white men murdered—The hiding-place—Joyful meeting of friends—Leave Friendly Island—A savage rebuked—New dangers—The fishing camp—Distracted state of the country—The second retreat for safety—The peace—Woody Point—Chief's remarks on the peace—The whites leave their hiding-place a second time—M'Kenzie's views—A courier—Discouraging rumours—War-parties—The great battle—Snakes and Blackfeet—Abandon Woody Point—Whites at their destination—Operations of a trapping party—Watchfulness—The camp—A trapper's life—Fort Nez Percés' troubles—The seven dead bodies—Alarming crowd—All hands at their post—Quinze'-sous—Phrenzy of the savages—Savage habits—Lamentation—Tum-a-tap-um the chief—Harangues—Peace-offering—Bodies removed—Second party—A savage in despair—The tumultuous mêlée—Medicine man shot—Murderer shot—Three men shot—Great concourse—Whites take to their bastions—Guns pointed—Forbearance of the whites—Council—Smoking—Loud talking—Order restored—Prince, the wounded Indian—The gun—The axe—Indian perfidy—Prince and Meloche—The outrage—Prince shot.

THE result of the Snake expedition put an end to the sharp contest which had for some years past divided the councils of Fort George.

No sooner was M'Kenzie's success in the Snake country known, than his opponents were loud in his praises. It was pleasing to see the council of Fort George this year enter so warmly and approve so strongly of our measures, in having established Fort Nez Percés, and gained so promising a footing in the Snake country.

We have noticed Kittson's return to join the Snake expedition; but, before taking up the thread of our future narrative, we propose to give the reader a description and view of Fort Nez Percés, and we shall then conduct him to M'Kenzie's camp, and give him an account of Indian life in these parts.

For the purpose of protection, as well as of trade among Indians, the custom is, to have each establishment surrounded with an inclosure of pickets some twelve or fifteen feet high. This inclosure is dignified with the name of fort; the natives have free ingress and egress at all times, and within its walls all the business of traffic is transacted. A little more precaution was, however, necessary at the Nez Percés station, on account of the many warlike tribes that infest the country.

Instead of round pickets, the palisades of Fort Nez Percés were all made of sawn timber. For this purpose, wood of large size, and cut twenty feet long, was sawed into pieces of two and a half feet broad by six inches thick. With these ponderous planks the establishment was surrounded, having on the top a range of balustrades four feet high, which served the double purpose of ramparts and loop-holes, and was smooth, to prevent the natives scaling the walls. A strong gallery, five feet broad, extended all around. At each angle was placed a large reservoir sufficient to hold two hundred gallons of water, as a security against fire; the element we most dreaded in the designs of the natives. Inside of this wall were built ranges of store-houses and dwelling-houses for the hands; and in the front of these buildings was another wall, twelve feet high, of sawn timber also, with port holes and slip doors, which divided the buildings from the open square inside. Thus, should the Indians at any time get in, they would see nothing but a wall before them on all sides; they could have no intercourse with the people in the fort, unless by their consent, and would therefore find themselves in a prison, and infinitely more exposed to danger than if they had been on the outside. Besides the ingenious construction of the outer gate, which opened and shut by a pully, two double doors secured the entrance; and the natives were never admitted within the walls, except when specially invited on important occasions. All trade with them was carried on by means of an aperture in the wall, eighteen inches square, secured by an iron door, and communicating with the trading shop; we standing on the inside, and the Indians on the outside. On all other occasions, excepting trade, we mixed with them outside; differing in this, as in every other respect, from all the other trading-posts in the Indian country.

Among other difficulties, it was not the least, after the fort was built, to succeed in bringing the Indians to trade in the manner we had fixed upon for the security of the place; although they had every convenience allowed them, such as a house at the gate, fire, tobacco, and a man to attend them at all hours. It was a long time before they got reconciled to our plan. "Are the whites afraid of us? If so," said they, "we will leave our arms outside." "No," said I, "if we had been afraid of you we should not have come among you." "Are the whites afraid we will steal anything?" "No," said I, "but your young men are foolish." "That's true," said they. We persisted in the plan, and they of necessity had to submit. Excluding the Indians, although contrary to Mr. M'Kenzie's opinion, ultimately answered so well, that it ought to be adopted wherever the natives are either hostile or troublesome.

Our weapons of defence were composed of four pieces of ordnance, from one to three pounds, besides ten wall-pieces or swivels, sixty stand of muskets and bayonets, twenty boarding pikes, and a box of hand-grenades. The fort was defended by four strong wooden towers or bastions, and a cohorn, or small mortar, above the gate; it was, therefore, at once the strongest and most complete fort west of the Rocky Mountains, and might be called the Gibraltar of Columbia. To construct and finish, in so short a time, an establishment so strong and compact in all its parts was no ordinary undertaking; by industry and perseverance, however, the task was accomplished. Thus, in the short period of a few months, as if by enchantment, the savage disposition of the Indians was either soothed or awed; a stronghold had arisen in the desert, and the British banner floating over it, proudly proclaimed it the mistress of a vast territory: it was a triumph of British energy and enterprise, of civilisation over barbarism.

During the course of our proceedings, a constant tide of visitors, from quarters the most remote, flowed in, to satisfy their curiosity concerning our establishment; among others were the turbulent lords of the Falls. Whether their barbarity was soothed by the compliment of a resource of this kind among them, whether they felt gratified by our embassy to conciliate their enemies and do away with the evils of war, it is difficult to say; but a visible reform was now very obvious in their deportment to the whites: they invariably went and came in the most exemplary manner.

Having given the reader a brief description of Fort Nez Percés, and noticed the salutary effect our establishment had on the conduct of the natives, I now, according to promise, resume the narrative of operations in the Snake country. As soon as the annual supply of goods conveyed by Kittson had reached M'Kenzie's camp, the latter, knowing the character of his people, and that the moment they had their supplies in their own possession they would be bartering and trafficking every article away with the natives, in order to guard against this difficulty, not only deferred the distribution among the party until the return of Kittson and the men who had to convey the furs to this place, but resolved on keeping the supplies entire until they reached their winter-quarters; when every man would have his equipment, and winter supplies, at the time required. The conduct of the Iroquois last year had taught M'Kenzie this lesson; and this measure was also a check against desertion: their supplies being before them, encouraged and stimulated all to a perseverance in well-doing.

It was a plan, however, that subjected the person in charge to the risk of life as well as of property. Had the Snakes been of a character to respect property when once in their own hands, he might have distributed the whole, and left every man to take care of his own; but the very reverse being the case, he was compelled to adopt the plan of taking care of it for them, until they reached their winter-quarters. Therefore as soon as Kittson, and the men required to escort the furs to this place, set off, M'Kenzie was left with only three men in charge of all the property; for although the Iroquois had returned to their duty, they were absent at the time, collecting their horses and traps which they had left and squandered away among the Indians; but they were expected back hourly. Thus situated, and the Iroquois not arriving at the appointed time, M'Kenzie and his three men erected a small breastwork, secured their property, and guarding it, waited with anxiety the arrival of succour.

Two days after this unavoidable division of our people, a very suspicious party of the mountain Snakes appeared at their little camp. They were very importunate, and with the view of turning their barbarity into friendship, M'Kenzie had given them some trifles to get rid of them; but the kind treatment of our friends was construed into fear, and only stimulated the Indians to demand more. Soon after, other parties equally audacious arrived, but no Iroquois! The hostile attitude and threats of the natives were now beyond endurance: they attempted to get over the breastwork, to push our people back, and to steal all that they could lay hands upon! Up to this period our people had stood on the outside of their property, but at this critical moment M'Kenzie and his men, grasping their guns, sprung over the breastwork, lighted a match, and placing a keg full of gunpowder between them and their enemies, boldly determined to defend their property, or die. At this critical movement, the Indians, taken by surprise, fell back a little; when

M'Kenzie, with perhaps more courage than prudence, dared them to renew their threats!

While the fate of our little band hung as by a thread, the savages who menaced them took to flight, without a word! The first impression was that they were panic struck, from the dread of the powder; it was then apprehended that they meditated some stratagem: the respite, however, gave our friends time to reflect.

As soon as they considered it safe to look about them, they perceived on the opposite side of the river a war-party of the Shaw-ha-ap-tens, consisting of two hundred men, all having fire-arms, and mounted on horseback. On their arrival they assembled in a tumultuous group on the beach. It was the Red Feather and his band, who had been ill disposed at the peace. Our friends were at no loss to account for the sudden and mysterious departure of the Snakes. But still their situation was not the more secure, for they had as much to fear from the one party as from the other: although the Shaw-ha-ap-tens would have respected the whites on their own lands, yet they had no mercy to expect in an enemy's country.

The appearance of this warlike cavalcade might have chilled the boldest heart: their gestures, their yelling, and whooping were truly horrible. The Indians called to our people to cross over and give them a smoke. At the same time it was evident that they were making every preparation to take advantage of them while on the water. This invitation, however, not being complied with, they held a council, with a view, it was supposed, of crossing over themselves. Our people on perceiving this strengthened their little fortification, and having four guns to each man, they were determined at least on selling their lives dearly. The natives in the meantime plunged into the river with their steeds, but were forced back again. They plunged again and again, but as often were compelled to return from the strength of the current. Their consultations were frequent, and the brandishing of their arms indicated their bloody intentions. After capering along the beach on their chargers for some time, they at length disappeared, and our party saw them no more. On their way back, towards the Blue Mountains, however, the Indians unfortunately fell upon the trail of Kittson and his party, and before he had time to get to a stronghold or concentrate his people, the savages overtook his rear, and shot and scalped two of his men. After the first onset, they wheeled about and got off clear.

No sooner had the war-party disappeared than M'Kenzie and his men withdrew, with their property, to a hiding-place. Crossing over a channel of the river, they got upon an island, and took up their abode in the thick woods. From this retreat, they could, unperceived, distinguish the savages passing and re-passing in bands. They had, however, to avoid making a fire during the daytime, as the smoke would have discovered their retreat.

In this island our friends remained twenty-two days, before Kittson and his party got back to them. The very next day after, fifteen of the twenty-five prodigal Iroquois joined them. One had been killed in a scuffle with the natives, two had deserted, and the other seven had joined the Snakes! The meeting with our friends was a joyful one, though each party had its troubles and its adventures to recount: but such is the life of an Indian trader, that the most trying scenes are no sooner passed away than they are forgotten.

Our friends now set about leaving the island to proceed on their journey. Our trappers and hunters being all mustered, amounted to seventy-five men. This was the number that composed the second adventure into the Snake country: still it was twenty-five less than the number that had been promised Mr. M'Kenzie. Advancing on their journey, during the first few days they saw several parties of the banditti, and, among others, some of those very villains who had threatened to rob M'Kenzie, and his three men, were recognised! Mr. M'Kenzie, therefore, singled one out, and, after addressing him at some length, took hold of him, and asked him if he was as brave a man that day, as he was upon the former occasion! The fellow was mute. M'Kenzie then shaking him rather roughly, gave him a slap in the face, and left him an object of derision to the bystanders. The Indians now had changed their tone.

In their progress M'Kenzie and his party came to a very formidable camp, of about eight hundred huts and tents. The Indians were engaged chiefly in fishing for salmon; and being but indifferently disposed towards the whites, our friends passed the night without sleep, and at dawn of day left the suspicious ground, to look out for a more defensible spot. They were anxious to have a parley with the chiefs, and therefore they took up their position on an island where they would be secure. It was thought imprudent to proceed without having an interview with the chiefs of the different tribes as they advanced.

After this interview, in which it was explained that the present visit of the whites among the Indians was with the double object of making peace between themselves and the Nez Percés, and of supplying their wants, the chiefs were informed that as the Nez Percés had made overtures of peace, they, on their part, it was hoped, would not withhold their consent. When the word peace was mentioned, one of the chiefs smiled: "Peace with the Shaw-ha-ap-tens!" said he; then looking M'Kenzie steadfastly in the face, and pointing to the current of the river, "Do you see that current? Stop it then!" exclaimed the great man. "That 's impossible," rejoined M'Kenzie. "So is peace with the

Shaw-ha-ap-tens; they are at this moment on our lands, and perhaps before night, my wives and my children will be scalped by them!" M'Kenzie soothed the old chief, and assured him that the whites would do their utmost to promote peace. He told him that the whites were willing, if encouraged, to open a trade with the great Snake nation; a people whose lands, by lying so remote, must, at all times, be ill provided with every necessary, as well as the more essential part of their warlike implements. He added to these professions a few trifling presents, which left a favourable impression. This done, our friends prepared to change their quarters.

It was not M'Kenzie's intention, on setting out, to have visited these Indians, or to have entered on the peace question at all: he wished to defer these points until he had first conveyed and placed his men on the field of their labours; but having thus unexpectedly met with them, and apprehending that he might not find them so conveniently at any other time, he resolved on taking them, tribe by tribe, on his way, and settling the business at once.

As our people advanced, several bands were met, and the same routine of peace-making gone through. One day, as they journeyed, they fell in with a friendly band of the Snakes, who gave them intelligence that a grand war-party of the Indians, inhabiting the east side of the mountains, were a short distance before them. While these Indians and our people were in communication, a courier from behind overtook them, with the news that two war-parties of the Nez Percés were also at their heels, and had killed several of the Snakes on the preceding day; thus verifying the words of the chief. Indian report is always to be received with great caution; yet our people thought it well to make a halt. Crowds of the banditti were emerging from all quarters, and fleeing towards their strongholds in the mountains; a sure sign that some commotion was apprehended. These manœuvres convinced our people that there must be some truth in the reports. Under these circumstances they took up their stand in a small wooded point, partly surrounded by the river; resolving to wait there for the present.

The friendly little band that had communicated the information to our people, notwithstanding the most urgent entreaties, would not remain with them; but hastened off, preferring the security of the forests to the slender protection of the whites. Several other parties of the Snakes, however, came and encamped along with our people, depending on them for support: other parties passed and repassed, without stopping. The Nez Percés behind, the Black Feet before, and the hostile Snakes everywhere about, our people were completely surrounded. It was therefore beyond human foresight to see a way to avoid such a combination of evils as threatened them on all sides.

The Nez Percés, finding that their enemies the Black Feet intervened between them and the

Snakes, wheeled about in another direction, and our people heard nothing more of them. But the Snakes and Black Feet had a severe battle, which ended in favour of the former: thirty Black Feet, and more Snakes, strewed the well-contested field. As soon as the vanquished retreated, the Snakes paraded about, exhibiting their trophies within sight of our friends. Victory stimulates to revenge; the Snakes, therefore, assumed a high tone; they came in crowds from their hiding-places; and joining the victorious party in their scalp-dancing and scalp-singing, formed a host of at least five or six thousand. Their huts, their tents, altogether resembled a city in an uproar; and their scattered fires and illuminations, during the nights, exhibited an awful spectacle to our encircled friends: their shouts and yelling, their gestures and frantic movements, were very terrifying.

After eighteen days' delay at Woody Point, the natives moved off almost in a body; and from the spies which we kept hovering about these Indians, we obtained seasonable advice that the hostile tribes had retired; consequently, our party might pass on in safety. Thus by a combination of fortunate circumstances they were again relieved from danger.

Having left their recent abode, accompanied by a friendly chief and his band, our people proceeded through an open and delightful country. During this part of their journey, they crossed the spot where the great battle had been recently fought, and saw in many places putrid carcases and human bones scattered about. And here the chief that accompanied our party pointed out the skulls of their enemies—"Look at these," said he to M'Kenzie, "the heads of the Black Feet are much smaller than those of the Snakes, and not so round." They also crossed innumerable trails, on which the tracks were still quite fresh; but at that period all appeared to be quiet. After thirty-three days' hazardous travelling, reckoning from the time Kittson joined the party on the island, they arrived at their hunting-ground. Here the men were equipped for the winter, and commenced hunting.

M'Kenzie intended, should the natives prove peaceably inclined, and the trapping get on smoothly among them, to spend part of the winter in examining the country further to the south. He was likewise anxious to have an interview with the principal chiefs of the Snake nation, not having hitherto seen them. In his letter to me, dated "Black Bears Lake, Sept. 10, 1819," he remarked: "We have passed a very anxious and troublesome summer. War-parties frequent; in dangers often; but still we do not despair. Time and perseverance will do much. You will make no arrangements for forwarding our supplies; we have had enough of that already. I will accompany the spring returns, and try to be at Fort Nez Percés by the 20th of next June." This letter was brought me by an Indian of the Falls, at the latter end of October.

We have now given the reader some idea of an Indian trader's life in these parts; and by way of following up the subject a little further, we shall describe how trapping with a large party is generally carried on among Indians.

A safe and secure spot, near wood and water, is first selected for the camp. Here the chief of the party resides with the property. It is often exposed to danger, or sudden attack, in the absence of the trappers, and requires a vigilant eye to guard against the lurking savages. The camp is called head quarters. From hence all the trappers, some on foot, some on horseback, according to the distance they have to go, start every morning, in small parties, in all directions, ranging the distance of some twenty miles around. Six traps is the allowance for each hunter; but to guard against wear and tear, the complement is more frequently ten. These he sets every night, and visits again in the morning; sometimes oftener, according to distance, or other circumstances. The beaver taken in the traps are always conveyed to the camp, skinned, stretched, dried, folded up with the hair in the inside, laid by, and the flesh used for food. No sooner, therefore, has a hunter visited his traps, set them again, and looked out for some other place, than he returns to the camp, to feast, and enjoy the pleasures of an idle day.

There is, however, much anxiety and danger in going through the ordinary routine of a trapper's duty. For as the enemy is generally lurking about among the rocks and hiding-places, watching an opportunity, the hunter has to keep a constant look-out; and the gun is often in one hand, while the trap is in the other. But when several are together, which is often the case in suspicious places, one-half set the traps, and the other half keep guard over them. Yet notwithstanding all their precautions, some of them fall victims to Indian treachery.

The camp remains stationary while two-thirds of the trappers find beaver in the vicinity; but whenever the beaver becomes scarce, the camp is removed to some more favourable spot. In this manner, the party keeps moving from place to place, during the whole season of hunting. Whenever serious danger is apprehended, all the trappers make for the camp. Were we, however, to calculate according to numbers, the prospects from such an expedition would be truly dazzling: say, seventy-five men, with each six traps, to be successfully employed during five months; that is, two in the spring, and three in the fall, equal to 131 working days, the result would be 58,950 beaver! Practically, however, the case is very different. The apprehension of danger, at all times, is so great, that three-fourths of their time is lost in the necessary steps taken for their own safety. There is also another serious drawback unavoidably accompanying every large party. The beaver is a timid animal; the least noise, therefore, made about its haunt will keep it from coming out for nights together; and noise is unavoidable when the party is large. But when the party is small, the hunter has a chance of being more or less successful. Indeed, were the nature of the ground such as to admit of the trappers moving about in safety, at all times, and alone, six men, with six traps each, would, in the same space of time, and at the same rate, kill as many beavers —say 4716—as the whole seventy-five could be expected to do! And yet the evil is without a remedy; for no small party can exist in these parts. Hence the reason why beavers are so numerous.

Having conducted M'Kenzie and his party to their hunting-ground, we shall take our leave of them, while we notice the occurrences at Fort Nez Percés; and then, in due time, we will take up the subject of the Snake expedition again. Our last notice of this place was the effect our establishment had on the conduct of the Indians. Yet, with all their submission, it was more apparent than real; for I have never experienced more anxiety and vexation than among these people. Not an hour of the day passed, but some insolent fellow, and frequently fifty at a time, interrupted us, and made us feel our unavoidable dependence upon their caprice. "Give me a gun," said one; "I want ammunition," said another; a third wanted a knife, a flint, or something else. Give to one, you must give to all.

Refuse them, they immediately got angry, told us to leave their lands, and threatened to prevent our people from going about their duties. Their constant theme was—"Why are the whites so stingy with their goods? They hate us, or they would be more liberal." A fellow raps at the gate, calling out, "I want to trade!"—when you attend his call he laughs in your face, and has nothing to sell. In short, they talk of nothing but war, think of nothing but scalp-dancing, horse-racing, and gambling; and when tired of these, idleness is their delight. On every little hill they are to be seen all day in groups, with a paper looking-glass in one hand and a paint-brush in the other. Half their time is spent at the toilet, or sauntering about our establishment. In their own estimation they are the greatest men in the world. The whites who labour they look upon as slaves, and call them by no other name. I had, therefore, to lay down a rule in all my dealings with them. However sudden the call might be, I never obeyed it until I had walked, backwards and forwards, across the fort twice. Nothing then surprised me, or ruffled my temper; and I often found the benefit of the plan.

These Indians, with all their independence, are far from being a happy people. They live in a constant state of anxiety. Every hostile movement about the frontiers excites alarm, and sets the whole country on the *qui vive*.

We have already noticed that a band of the

Shaw-ha-ap-tens, on its return from a war expedition against the Snakes, killed Delorme and Jeanvene, two of Kittson's men, on their way to this place with the Snake returns: they also killed several of the Snakes. One evil often leads to another; for the Shaw-ha-ap-tens had no sooner got back than a Snake party were at their heels; but, happening to fall in with a few stragglers frolicking among the bushes and gathering berries, who belonged to the Wallawalla camp, not three miles from our fort, they killed one man, four women, and two children; then re-crossed the mountains, and got off clear, carrying along with them the scalps of their victims, and two young women and a man as slaves.

The two captive women, as well as the man, being of some rank, it caused a tremendous commotion at this place. The first intimation we had of this sanguinary affair was the next morning, after the deed had been committed. Going on the gallery as soon as I got up, according to usual custom, I perceived, at no great distance, a dense crowd of people, some on foot, some on horseback, making for the fort, in the most frantic and disorderly manner, and filling the air with shrieks and lamentations. It struck me the instant I saw them, that it was a war-party; calling therefore all hands together, every man was placed at his post, and we accordingly waited their approach: we had only ten men about the fort at the time.

As they drew near, the more frantic and tumultuous they became; so I inspected the men's arms; and finding one fellow, named Quinze-sous, pale and agitated, with his gun still unloaded, and fearing his cowardly conduct might influence others—for they were all more or less panic-struck—I drew the iron ramrod out of his gun, and giving him a rap or two over the head with it, drove him off the gallery and locked him up in one of the stores; then returning, I promised a reward to every one of the others that would behave well. By this time the crowd had reached the fort gate, and I saw, for the first time, that it was no war-party, but our own Indians! Yet seeing them carry a number of dead bodies, the affair appeared still more mysterious. And as Indians often carry false colours to decoy the unwary, we were determined to be on our guard. Friends or foes we were prepared to receive them. The number might have been four hundred in all; but they were a mixture of men and women. It may be asked, where were all our guns, our bastions, and strong fort, if a rabble of Indians gave us so much anxiety? Our object, we answer, was not merely defence, but peace and friendship. We could have easily dispersed the crowd, few as we were; but one shot from our guns would have sealed our ruin and that of our friends in the Snake country. The whites never oppose force to force, but in the last extremity.

When the crowd reached the fort gate the seven bodies were laid on the ground; the weather being sultry, the bodies were much swollen and extremely offensive. This was no sooner done than the savage habit of cutting themselves, mingled with howling and shrieks of despair, commenced. The scene was horrible. Under such circumstances sympathy for the living as well as the dead was excited, because their pain and sufferings must have been acute; and this, as a matter of course, increased their inclination to violent mourning. To have seen those savages streaming all over with blood, one would suppose they could never have survived such acts of cruelty inflicted on themselves; but such wounds, although bad, are not dangerous. To inflict these wounds on himself, the savage takes hold of any part of his skin, between his forefinger and thumb, draws it out to the stretch, and then runs a knife through it, between the hand and the flesh, which leaves, when the skin resumes its former place, two unsightly gashes, resembling ball holes, out of which the blood issues freely. With such wounds, and sometimes others of a more serious nature, the near relations of the deceased completely disfigure themselves.

As soon as the bodies were laid on the ground, with their crimson-dyed garments, one of the chiefs, called by the Canadians "Gueule plat,"* called out to me, with an air of effrontery, "Come out here." The moment this call reached me, I felt a conflict between duty and inclination. Refuse the call I could not; yet I obeyed it with reluctance, and almost wished myself with Quinze-sous in the store rather than where I was. Turning round to the sentinel at the door, I told him to lock the gate after me, and keep a sharp look out. The moment I appeared outside the gate, so horrible was the uproar, that it baffles all description. Intoxicated with wrath and savage rage, they resembled furies more than human beings; and their ghastly, wild, and forbidding looks were all directed towards me, as if I had been the cause of their calamity. Tam-a-tap-um the chief then coming up to me, and pointing to one of the dead bodies, said, "You see my sister there;" then uncovering the body to show the wounds, added, "that is a ball hole." "The whites," said he again, "have murdered our wives and our children. They have given guns and balls to our enemies. Those very guns and balls have killed our relations." These words were no sooner uttered than they were repeated over and over again by the whole frantic crowd; who, hearing the chief, believed them to be true. Excitement was now at its height. Their gestures, their passionate exclamations, showed what was working within, and I expected every moment to receive a ball or an arrow. One word of interruption spoken by me at the critical moment, in favour of the whites, might have proved fatal to myself. I therefore remained silent, watching a favourable opportunity, and also examining closely the holes in the garments of the dead bodies. The holes I was convinced were made by arrows, and not by balls as the chief had asserted; but it remained for me to convince others when an opportunity offered.

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* Flat-mouth.

Every violent fit of mourning was succeeded, as is generally the case among savages, by a momentary calm. As soon, therefore, as I perceived the rage of the crowd beginning to subside, and nature itself beginning to flag, I availed myself of the interval to speak in turn; for silence then would have been a tacit acknowledgment of our guilt. I therefore advanced, and taking the chief by the hand, said in a low tone of voice, as if overcome by grief, "My friend, what is all this? Give me an explanation. You do not love the whites; you have told me nothing yet." Tam-a-tap-um then turning to his people, beckoned to them with the hand to be silent; entire silence was not to be expected. He then went over the whole affair from beginning to end. When the chief ended, and the people were in a listening mood, I sympathised with their misfortunes, and observed that the whites had been undeservedly blamed. "They are innocent," said I, "and that I can prove. Look at that," said I, pointing to an arrow wound, which no one could mistake; "the wounds are those of arrows, not balls. Nor were the Snakes themselves so much to blame; as we shall be able to show."

At these assertions the chief looked angry, and there was a buzz of disapprobation among the crowd; but I told the chief to listen patiently until I had done. The chief then composed himself, and I proceeded. "After your solemn acquiescence in a peace between yourselves and the Snakes, through the influence of the whites, the Shaw-ha-ap-tens violated the second pledge by going again to war, across the Blue Mountains; and not content with having killed their enemies, they killed their friends also. They killed two of the whites. The Snakes in the act of retaliation have therefore made you all to mourn this day; they have made the whites to mourn also. But your loss is less than ours; your relations have been killed; but still you have their bodies: that consolation is denied us. Our friends have been killed, but we know not where their bodies lie." These facts, neither the chief nor the crowd could gainsay. The chief, with a loud voice, explained what I had said to the listening multitude; when they with one voice exclaimed, "It is true, it is true!" Leaving the chief, I then entered the fort, and taking some red cloth, laid six inches of it on each body, as a token of sympathy; then I told them to go and bury their dead. A loud fit of lamentation closed the scene. The bodies were then taken up, and the crowd moved off, in a quiet and orderly manner.

But the satisfaction we enjoyed at the departure of the savages was of short duration; for they were scarcely out of sight, and I scarcely inside the door, when another band, related to those who had been killed, arrived at the fort gate, and the loud and clamorous scene of mourning was again renewed.

Among this second crowd of visitors was a fellow dignified by the name of Prince, and brother to one of the young women who had been carried off by the Snakes. Prince encamped within fifty yards of the fort, and his tent was no sooner pitched than he began to chant the song of death. When an Indian resorts to this mode of mourning, it is a sure sign that "he has thrown his body away," as the Indians term it, and meditates self-destruction. Being told of Prince's resolution, I went to his tent to see him, and found him standing, with his breast leaning upon the muzzle of his gun; his hair was dishevelled, and he was singing with great vehemence: he never raised his head to see who I was. I knew all was not right, and spoke to him; but receiving no answer, I went away on my return to the fort. I had scarcely advanced twenty yards from his tent, before I heard the report of a gun behind me, and turning back again, I found the unfortunate fellow lying on the ground weltering in his blood, his gun partly under him. He was still breathing. The ball had entered his left breast, below the nipple, and came out near the backbone. The wound was bleeding freely, and he disgorged great quantities of blood. I went to the fort for some assistance, but on our return I expected that every moment would have been his last; however we dressed his wound, and did what we could to allay his suffering.

The Indians now assembled in great numbers, and were noisy and violent. In the first instance, they threw all the blame of the unfortunate affair on the whites; but in their rage and violence, they quarrelled among themselves, and this new direction in their excitement removed the odium in some degree from the whites, and diverted the tide of popular fury into another channel. During the affair, one of those unfortunate wretches called medicine-men happened to be sitting at the fort gate, when a brother of the man who had just shot himself went up to him, saying, "You dog! you have thrown your bad medicine on my brother, and he is dead; but you shall not live," and in saying so, he shot him dead on the spot. The ball, after passing through the man's body, went more than three inches into one of the fort palisades. I was standing on the gallery at the moment he was shot, and had it been on any other occasion but in the midst of a quarrel between the Indians, we certainly should have avenged his death on the spot; for the murdered man was an excellent Indian, and a sincere friend of the whites.

The scene now assumed a threatening aspect.

Guns, bows, arrows, and every missile that could be laid hold of, came into requisition; and robes, feathers, bells, belts, and trinkets of every description, were rattling about in true savage style. The fellow who had just shot the medicine-man was shot in his turn, and before the chiefs arrived, or could get a hearing, three others were shot. The place appeared more like a field of battle than anything else; for besides the five bodies that lay lifeless on the ground, twice that number were desperately wounded.

As soon as the deadly quarrel began, not knowing the intent of the Indians, nor how it might end, I shut the gates, and kept as clear of the quarrel as possible. In the midst of the confusion, the Indians poured in from all quarters, adding fuel to the flame; and some of them in approaching the place, thinking it was a quarrel between the whites and themselves, fired a shot or two at the fort before they were aware of the mistake. This made us take to our bastions: our matches were lighted, guns pointed, and we ourselves watched the manœuvres of the savages around us. One unguarded shot would have involved us in the quarrel, which it was our interest to avoid; as it would have put an end to all our prospects in the Snake as well as the Nez Percés quarter.

As soon as the chiefs could get a hearing, peace was gradually restored; and the five dead bodies were removed to the Indian camp, at a distance from the fort. Such a scene I should never wish to witness again. This affray, happening at our very door, gave us much uneasiness; as to keep the balance of good will at all times in our favour was a task of more than ordinary difficulty.

The day after, the different tribes assembled at Fort Nez Percés, and I had my hands full. The Shaw-ha-ap-tens arrived, the Cayouses, the Walla-wallas, and many others. The affairs of the preceding day were discussed, as well as the subject of our adventures in the Snake country, and the peace. A thousand questions were put and answered. Each chief betrayed impatience; one and all had to be satisfied. The whites were indirectly taxed with all the late troubles. The chiefs threatened to disregard the peace; and the late disasters furnished them with a pretext. They were bent on going to war with the Snakes again. As this step might have proved fatal to our intercourse in that quarter, I tried every plan to divert them from it. I invited them into the fort to smoke. There matters were talked over again, and they smoked and talked during several meetings. A whole week was spent in this business. At last, however, we came to terms, and we all smoked the calumet of peace once more. The chiefs solemnly promised not to renew hostilities until at least our friends had left the Snake country. So we parted once more as friends.

When our troubles were over, and matters had settled down to their ordinary level, I took Prince, the man who in cool despair had shot himself, under my care; as he not only survived, but showed symptoms of returning strength, I kept him, and nursed him from July until December following, when he was so far recovered as to be able to ride on horseback. At this stage, he accompanied his relations to their wintering-ground; but as he was still unable to undergo the fatigues of hunting, or endure much exercise, I fitted him out with the means of passing the winter comfortably, and we parted.

In the spring, on the return of the Indians to the fort, I was much pleased to see Prince among them as strong and hearty as ever! "I am sure," said he to me, when we met, "you are glad to see me well." I told him I was very happy to see him recovered, and hoped he would be a good man, and love the whites. He appeared thankful, and promised he would. "But," said he to me again, "you must give me a new gun; you know my relations destroyed my gun, when I got wounded." "I know they did," said I, "but I have no gun to spare." "I have been long sick," said he, "and am poor, I have nothing to buy one myself, and I cannot hunt without a gun." "You have plenty of horses," said I, "why don't you buy one?" On my saying so, he hung down his head. I saw, however, that my refusal did not please him, and that my telling him to sell his horses and buy a gun pleased him less. But I thought that I had done enough for him, and the more I gave him the less he would hunt. So I told him again I had no gun to spare; that I had nursed him for half a year, and saved his life, and that now, as he was well, he must try and provide for himself.

"What!" said he, sharply, "do you love a gun more than you love me?" "No," said I, "but I have no gun to spare." On my saying so, he got rather sulky, and held down his head, the first indication of an Indian's displeasure; for he had been telling his friends, as I learnt afterwards, that I would refuse him nothing. All this, however, passed between us, without remark, and as I thought in good will on both sides. I took no further notice of what he said, but turned round to another Indian to settle some little business I had with him. While doing so, Prince suddenly started up, saying, "Since you are so stingy, and love your gun so well, keep it, and give me an axe: perhaps you will refuse me that too." I was rather nettled at the fellow's impertinence, so I reproved him. "What, my friend," said I, "are you really angry with me?" "Yes," said he, abruptly. "The white people have two mouths, and two words. You said you liked me, and yet you refuse me a gun; but give me an axe, and keep your gun, since you prefer to see me like a squaw with an axe, rather than like a man with a gun." "What, my friend," said I again to him, "have I not done enough for you? Have I not done more for you than all your own people put together? Have I not saved your life? Have I not supported you all the winter? Yes, my friend, I have done so. And now that you are well you must do for yourself. I cannot let you have an axe, or anything else, unless you pay for it as others do; nor does your present conduct merit any more favours at my hand." And saying so, I turned round to the Indian I had been speaking to a little before.

The moment I turned round from him, Prince caught hold of a gun, and made an attempt to shoot me in the back; but it fortunately missed fire, and before I had time to turn round, the gun was taken out of his hands by one of the chiefs, who holding it up in the air, fired off the shot: it was fortunate that it missed fire the first time.

After this, Prince stood sullen and motionless. "Is it," said I, "because I saved your life, that you wished to deprive me of mine?" To this he made no reply. Taking, therefore, a ball out of one of his comrade's pouches, close by, I offered it to him, saying, "Let me see now if you really wish to kill me; there is a ball, load your gun again," and I then stood before him. But he would neither take the ball, nor reload the gun. This scene took place in the presence of more than fifty Indians, who remained silent spectators. I then entered the fort, leaving Prince still standing; but in a few minutes afterwards he sneaked off, and left the place: even the savages could not forbear reproving him for his conduct.

The reader has here a specimen of the gratitude which a trader meets with among these barbarous people. But we must follow Prince a little further.

After leaving the place, he happened to meet, at a little distance from the fort, one of my men, a Canadian, by the name of Meloche, coming home from a hunting trip. Prince therefore went up to him with a smiling countenance; and after shaking hands and talking a little with Meloche, he said to him, "Let me see your gun." Meloche made no hesitation, but handed it to him; for he looked upon Prince as one of ourselves, from his having been so long about the place; and he had often helped to take care of him during his sickness. No sooner, however, had Prince got the gun into his own hands, than he, as Indians generally do, examined whether or not it was loaded; finding it was, he leaped on his horse, drew on one side, and began to quarrel with Meloche, and reproach the whites: alluding to my having refused him a gun and an axe. But Meloche was not a man to be frightened by mere words, and Prince, to prevent his getting hold of him, turned round, shot Meloche's horse, kept the gun, and scampered off.

Meloche arrived at the fort enraged, got a horse and gun, and would have pursued after Prince, at all hazard, had I not prevented him. I intended to adopt some milder plan for the recovery of his gun and the loss of his horse; but time was not allowed us to put this plan into execution. Not many days afterwards, Prince exchanged the gun with another Indian for a horse. The Indians going out to hunt, Prince, in approaching an elk, was accidentally shot dead by a ball out of the very gun he took from Meloche. The fellow who had it happened unluckily to be approaching the same animal as Prince, but in an opposite direction, when on firing, the ball missed the elk, glanced from a tree, and proved fatal to Prince.

With this incident we hasten to close the present chapter, reserving for the next our further proceedings in the Snake country.

# CHAPTER VIII.

Snake country—Preliminary remarks—Interview with the two great chiefs—The Iroquois again—Influence of the chiefs—Good order—The three great sections of the Snake nation—Dog-eaters—Fish-eaters—Robbers—The mammoth camp—Men of size—Pee-eye-em—The Snake Council—Peace-making—Result—The chief's remark on the war—The trembling Ban-at-tees—The land of profusion—Trading peculiarities of the Snakes—Importance of trifles—Chief's views—Indians decamp—Whites change places—The great snow-storm—Whites outwitted—Indians at home—Cheap mode of wintering horses—Hodgen's adventures—Ama-ketsa's conduct—Natural instinct—Pyramids of beaver—Chief's friendly conduct—Three Owhyhees murdered—Spring arrangements—Journey homeward—Anxieties at Fort Nez Percés—M'Kenzie's arrival—General remarks—Face of the country—Varied scenery—Mountains and valleys—The pilot knobs—Novelties—Sulphur streams—Hot and cold springs—Natural bridges—Subterraneous rivers—Great fish camp—Provident habits—Delicate appetites—Economy of the Snakes—Horse-flesh a dainty—Native tobacco—Legend—Pottery—Snake ingenuity—A clumsy substitute for canoes—Manœuvres of the Snakes to elude their pursuers—M'Kenzie's departure—North-westers west of the mountains—Lawsuits—Result of the trials—New deed-poll—Dissolution of the North-West Company—The effect—Begin the world again—Fate of dependents—M'Kenzie's return—Leaves the country—Sketch of his character.

THE business of the year being ended, we resume the subject of the Snake expedition.

M'Kenzie, in following up his first intention, disposed of his trappers to the best advantage; and, taking with him three men and an Indian chief, left his people, and set out on a trip of discovery towards the south. He had not proceeded far, before he fell in with the main body of the great Snake nation, headed by the two principal chiefs, 17204 Pee-eye-em and Ama-qui-em. An interview with these two great men, in reference to the peace, was M'Kenzie's chief object in the trip he had undertaken; he therefore, lost no time, but returned back to where he had left his people, the Indians accompanying him.

The regularity and order of these Indians convinced the whites that they were under a very different government to any other they had yet seen in the country—even preferable to the arrangements of the whites; the influence of the two great chiefs being, at all times, sufficient to restrain and keep the whole in subordination, and our friends free from annoyance. Not so was it among our own trappers; for, although M'Kenzie had only been absent from them ten days, on his return he found that the Iroquois had commenced their old tricks of trafficking away their hunting implements with the natives; and their familiar and criminal intercourse had already drawn down on them the contempt of the Indians.

To prevent the evils arising from the animosities which had been engendered between both parties by the conduct of the thoughtless Iroquois, was difficult: they well-nigh brought the whites into a disagreeable scrape; but the good sense and conduct of the chiefs, on this occasion, was, in the highest degree, praiseworthy; so that matters were soon amicably adjusted. This done, M'Kenzie turned his attention to the Indians, and the peace. But before we enter upon the latter subject, we shall give some account of the Snake Indians as a nation.

The great Snake nation may be divided into three divisions, namely, the Shirry-dikas, or dog-eaters; the War-are-ree-kas, or fish-eaters; and the Ban-at-tees, or robbers. But, as a nation, they all go by the general appellation of Sho-sho-nes, or Snakes. The word Sho-sho-ne means, in the Snake language, "inland." The Snakes, on the west side of the Rocky Mountains, are what the Sioux are on the east side—the most numerous and the most powerful in the country. The Shirry-dikas are the real Sho-sho-nes, and live in the plains, hunting the buffalo. They are generally slender, but tall, well-made, rich in horses, good warriors, well-dressed, clean in their camps, and in their personal appearance bold and independent.

The War-are-ree-kas are very numerous; but neither united nor formidable. They live chiefly by fishing, and are to be found along all the rivers, lakes, and water-pools throughout the country. They are more corpulent, slovenly, and indolent than the Shirry-dikas. Badly armed and badly clothed, they seldom go to war. Dirty in their camps, in their dress, and in their persons, they differed so far, in their general habits, from the Shirry-dikas, that they appeared as if they had been people belonging to another country. These are the defenceless wretches whom the Black Feet and Piegans, from beyond the mountains, generally make war upon. These foreign mercenaries carry off the scalps and women of the defenceless War-are-ree-kas, and the horses of the Shirry-dikas; but are never formidable nor bold enough to attack the latter in fair and open combat.

The Ban-at-tees, or mountain Snakes, live a predatory and wandering life in the recesses of the mountains, and are to be found in small bands, or single wigwams, among the caverns and rocks. They are looked upon by the real Sho-sho-nes themselves as outlaws: their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them. They live chiefly by plunder. Friends and foes are alike to them! They generally frequent the northern frontiers, and other mountainous parts of the country. In summer, they go almost naked; but during winter they clothe themselves with the skins of rabbits, wolves, and other animals.

They are complete masters of what is called the cabalistical language of birds and beasts; and can imitate, to the utmost perfection, the singing of birds, the howling of wolves, and the neighing of horses; by which means, they can approach, by day or by night, all travellers, rifle them, and then fly to their hiding-places among the rocks. They are not numerous, and are on the decline. Bows and arrows are their only weapons of defence.

The country that these and the other Snake tribes claim as their own, and over which they roam, is very extensive. It is bounded on the east by the Rocky Mountains, on the south by the Spanish waters; on the Pacific, or west side, by an imaginary line, beginning at the west end, or spur, of the Blue Mountains, behind Fort Nez Percés, and running parallel with the ocean to the height of land beyond the Umpqua River, in about north lat. 41° (this line never approaches within 150 miles of the Pacific); and on the north, by another line, running due east from the said spur of the Blue Mountains, and crossing the great south branch, or Lewis River, at the Dalles, till it strikes the Rocky Mountains 200 miles north of the three pilot knobs, or the place hereafter named the "Valley of Troubles." The Snake country, therefore, contains an area, on a rough calculation, of about 150,000 square miles. For an Indian country, it may be called thickly inhabited, and may contain 36,000 souls, or nearly one person to every four square miles.

With all their experience, our friends possessed but a very confused idea of the Snakes, both as to their names or numbers. One would call them Bannacks, and another Wurracks, while a third would have them named Dogs! Nor was it till I had subsequently gone to their country, travelled, traded, and conversed with them, that I could learn anything like facts to be depended upon; and even after all I can state, it cannot be relied upon as entirely correct.

It was from the chiefs, who, it would appear, were very intelligent men, that M'Kenzie and his people, by indirect questions, came to the conclusion that the Snake nation numbered as I have stated; which, of course, is only an approximation to truth. He could get no satisfactory answer to direct questions; and that is the case with almost all savages. Ask an Indian his name, and he will hesitate to tell you; ask him his age, and you will receive an evasive answer! When M'Kenzie put the direct question to the great chief Pee-eye-em, "How many Indians are there in the Snake nation?" he said, "What makes you ask that question?" "I should like to know," said he, "in order to tell our father, the great white chief." "Oh! oh! tell him, then," said Pee-eye-em, "that we are as numerous as the stars!"

In the part of the country where our friends had taken up their winter quarters, the buffaloes were very numerous; thousands covered the plains. In this land of profusion, the Indians likewise pitched their camp. The novelty of the presence of the whites, and the news of peace, soon collected an immense crowd together—Shirry-dikas, War-are-ree-kas, and Ban-at-tees;—so that, before the end of a month, there were, according to their statements, more than ten thousand souls in the camp! This immense body covered a space of ground of more than seven miles in length, on both sides of the river; and it was somewhat curious, as well as interesting, to see such an assemblage of rude savages observe such order.

The Shirry-dikas were the centre of this city; the War-are-ree-kas at one end, the Ban-at-tees at the other, forming, as it were, the suburbs. But in this immense camp, our people were a little surprised to see, on each side of the Shirry-dikas, or main camp, nearly a mile of vacant ground between them and their neighbours the War-are-ree-kas and Ban-at-tees. This mysterious point was soon cleared up; for as the other Indians came in, they encamped by the side of the Shirry-dikas, till at last the whole vacant space was filled up; the same took place among the War-are-ree-kas and Ban-at-tees; each clan swelled its own camp; so that every great division was, in a manner, separate. The whole of this assemblage of camps was governed by the voice of two great chiefs, Pee-eye-em and Ama-qui-em, who were brothers, and both fine-looking, middle-aged men; the former was six feet two inches high, the latter above six feet, and both stout in proportion. M'Kenzie himself, the stoutest of the whites, was a corpulent, heavy man, weighing 312lbs.; yet he was nothing to be compared, either in size or weight, to one of the Indian chiefs: his waistcoat was too narrow, by fourteen inches, to button round Pee-eye-em.

Having now presented our readers with a brief outline of the Snake Indians, we next remark on that all-absorbing topic, the peace. As soon as all the natives were assembled together, M'Kenzie made known to the chiefs his views as to the establishing of a general and permanent peace between them and their enemies on the northern frontier. Besides Pee-eye-em and Ama-qui-em, there were fifty-four other dignitaries at the council-board, six of whom were War-are-ree-kas; but not one Ban-at-tee. The rest were all Shirry-dikas, and others belonging to the same class. After stating that the Nez Percés had agreed to the peace, and that it now depended solely upon them to have it finally ratified, M'Kenzie also signified to them that, if the peace met with their cordial approbation, and was once established throughout the country, the whites would then open a profitable trade with the Snake nation, and that henceforth they might be supplied with all their wants.

On hearing the concluding part of the proposition, the approbation was universal. All seemed to hail peace with their enemies as a most desirable object. Here the great sachem Pee-eye-em rose up, and was the first to speak. "What have we to do with it?" said he. "We never go to war on the Nez Percés, or any other tribe in that quarter; nor do they ever make war on us. These," said he, pointing to the War-are-ree-kas and Ban-at-tee camps, "these are the people who disturb and wage war with the Nez Percés, and plunder the whites when in their power; but we have no hand in it; and for us to run after and punish the Ban-at-tees every time they do evil would be endless. It would be just as easy for us to hunt out and kill all the foxes in the country, as to hunt out and punish every Ban-at-tee that does mischief. They are like the mosquitoes—not strong, but they can torment; and, by their misdeeds and robberies, the War-are-ree-kas often suffer from the inroads of the northern tribes."

"The Black Feet and Piegans," continued Pee-eye-em, "are our only enemies; a peace with them would be more desirable to us than a peace with the Nez Percés; but still, as it is the wish of the whites, the interest of the War-are-ree-kas, and ours, to get our wants supplied, we cordially agree to it." Ama-qui-em spoke next, and gave his consent. And then Ama-ketsa, one of the War-are-ree-kas, a bold and intelligent chief, spoke at great length in favour of the peace; he denounced the Ban-at-tees as a predatory race, and the chief cause of all the Snake troubles with the Nez Percés.

A whole week was spent in adjusting this important business, and our people were heartily tired of it. At last, when all the chiefs had given their consent, four of the Ban-at-tees were invited, and they approached in evident fear. The peace was fully explained to them, and they were distinctly told by Pee-eye-em and Ama-qui-em, that if they did not regard the peace and live like the other Snake tribes, they would be punished with death.

In uttering these words, Ama-qui-em got quite enthusiastic. "Yes," said he, to the trembling Ban-at-tees, "you are robbers and murderers too! You have robbed the whites; you have killed the whites." After this declaration, he made a pause, as if regretting what he had said, and went on. "But why should I repeat a grievance? It is now past: let us utter it no more. Go then home to your wives and to your children. Rob no more, and we shall all be friends. You see the whites before you; they are our friends; you must be their friends. We must enforce the observance of peace; tell your people so, and forget it not."

The poor Ban-at-tees stood trembling and silent before the council like criminals; but the moment Ama-qui-em sat down, they all called out in the Snake language, "Hackana tabeboo, Hackana tabeboo." We are friends to the whites, we are friends to the whites.

The business over, M'Kenzie presented Pee-eye-em and Ama-qui-em with a flag each, as an emblem of peace. And at their request, one was given to Ama-ketsa, and one to the Ban-at-tees. As soon as the council broke up, our friends were anxious to know the truth of Ama-qui-em's assertion, "That they (the Ban-at-tees) had already killed the whites," and therefore sent for that chief and inquired into the matter. Ama-qui-em, after some little hesitation, explained it, by telling M'Kenzie that it was the Ban-at-tees that plundered and murdered Mr. Reid and his party in the autumn of 1813.

Our readers will no doubt have observed that we have omitted the customary ceremony of smoking during the present treaty of peace. Our reasons for so doing arose from the fact, that the Snakes prefer their own tobacco to ours: they are, perhaps, the only Indian nation on the Continent who manufacture and smoke their own tobacco. Several of them were, however, seen with bits of our tobacco in their medicine bags; but scarcely any were seen to smoke it: as to the ceremony of smoking at their councils, no Indians indulge in it more freely than the Snakes do.

The peace was no sooner concluded than a brisk trade in furs commenced. In their traffic, the most indifferent spectator could not but stare to see the Indians, chiefly War-are-ree-kas and Ban-at-tees, bringing large garments of four or five large beaver skins each, such as they use during winter for warmth, and selling them for a knife or an awl; and other articles of the fur kind, in proportion. It was so with the Columbia Indians in our first years; but they soon learned the mystery of trade, and their own interest. So will the

Snakes, for they are not deficient in acuteness. Horses were purchased for an axe each; and country provisions, such as dried buffalo, was cheap. Our people might have loaded a seventy-four gun ship with provisions, bought with buttons and rings.

It was truly characteristic of Indian trading to see these people dispose of articles of real value so cheaply, while other articles of comparatively no value at all, at least in the estimation of the whites, were esteemed highly by them. When any of our people, through mere curiosity, wished to purchase an Indian head-dress composed of feathers, or a necklace of bears' claws, or a little red earth or ochre out of any of their mystical medicine bags, the price was enormous; but a beaver skin, worth twenty-five shillings in the English market, might have been purchased for a brass finger-ring scarcely worth a farthing; while a dozen of the same rings was refused for a necklace of birds' claws, not worth half a farthing. Beaver, or any kind of fur, was of little or no value among these Indians; they never having any traders for such articles among them. Nor could they conceive what our people wanted with their old garments. "Have not the whites," asked a chief one day, smiling, "much better garments than ours?" Such garments, however, were not numerous, and were only used by the poorer sort. The Shirry-dikas were all clothed in buffalo robes and dressed deer skin; but no sooner had one and all of them seen European articles than they promised to turn beaver hunters: this disposition was of course encouraged by our people. Axes, knives, ammunition, beads, buttons, and rings, were the articles most in demand. Clothing was of no value: a knife sold for as much as a blanket; and an ounce of vermilion was of more value than a yard of fine cloth. With the exception of guns, which they might have got from other Indians, they had scarcely an article among them to show that they had ever mixed with civilised man; although it is well known that they had of late years occasionally seen the whites.

Trade was no sooner over, than Ama-qui-em mounted one of his horses and rode round and round the camp—which of itself was almost the work of a day—now and then making a halt to harangue the Indians respecting the peace, and their behaviour towards the whites, and telling them to prepare for raising camp. Three days successively this duty was performed by the chief, and in the morning of the fourth all the Shirry-dikas decamped in a body, and returned in the direction whence they had come. Although these people were very peaceable and orderly, yet our friends got heartily tired of the crowd, and were no less anxious than pleased to see them move off. The War-are-ree-kas and Ban-at-tees remained behind, and were very annoying; they soon assumed a haughty tone, and even the Ban-at-tees began to hold up their heads and speak after the Shirry-dikas had left. In short, our friends often wished the Shirry-dikas back again. At the end of a couple of weeks more, however, all the rest went off; but not without stealing three of the hunters' best horses and some beaver traps. So much for the peace! but the loss was less [illegible] than the annoyance of the thieves who had stolen them; of whom our people were glad to get clear.

When the Indians had left the ground, our hunters were divided into parties throughout the neighbourhood, and went with the other three of the Owhyhees along a small river to trap, where no danger was apprehended. Our people were now left to pursue their business of hunting, and they trapped with great success for some time; but as soon as the winter set in, some of the banditti hovered about their camp with the intention of carrying off their horses, which subjected them to constant watching day and night. Our people, therefore, took advantage of a snow-storm, and removed to some distance, in order to be out of their reach. During the bad weather, which lasted ten days, their want of a guide, and their ignorance of the best passes through the mountains, brought them into imminent peril of losing all their horses; at length, however, they were fortunate enough to get to a place of shelter, where their animals could feed, and they encamp in safety. Every one felt that their horses were secure, themselves relieved from watching, and that they had outwitted the

Indians; but the very next morning after they had arrived, six of their horses were stolen, and a gun and two steel traps, which had been left at the door of a hunter's tent, were carried off. The Indians had dogged them all the way, and played them this trick at last; so that they had to adopt the same plan as before, and watch all the winter.

To those who have never travelled in these wilds, it may be interesting to know how the trappers' horses are fed and stabled during the winter. No fodder is provided for them; there is no stable nor shelter; only the canopy of heaven above them. Up to their bellies in snow, which has often a crust on the top as hard as ice, the horses beat down the crust, scrape away the snow with their fore-feet, and feed on the dry and withered grass at the bottom. They often pass the winter without a drop of water, except from the icicles and snow which they happen to eat with their dry and tasteless food. After passing the night in this manner, they are bridled, saddled, and ridden about by the hunters all day; and when they arrive at night covered with sweat, tired and hungry, they are turned out again to dig their supper in the face of the deep snows, and in a cold ranging from 20° to 30° below zero of Fahrenheit's thermometer. The exercise may keep them in some degree warm; but the labour necessary to procure their food during the night is fully as fatiguing and laborious as the labour by day; and yet these hardy and vigorous animals are always in good condition.

But to return to our subject. During the storm, while our people were on their journey, one of the hunters, named Hodgens, getting separated from the party in the drift and snow, lost his way. In his wanderings he lost his horse, and from cold and hunger almost lost his life; for the lock of his gun got broke, so that he could not make a fire, and during two days and two nights he had to weather the storm without any. On the fourteenth day, however, while scarcely able to crawl, he had the good luck to fall on the main camp of the War-are-ree-kas; where recognising the chief's tent, from the manner in which it was painted, he advanced towards it, looking more like a ghost than a living being. On his entering, Ama-ketsa, surprised at his unexpected arrival, and still more surprised at his emaciated appearance, stared him in the face for some time, and could scarcely believe that it was a white man; but as soon as he was convinced of the reality, and made acquainted with the wanderer's forlorn state, he ordered one of his wives to put a new pair of shoes on his feet, gave him something to eat, and was extremely kind to him. Here Hodgens remained for eleven days in the chief's tent, nursed with all the care and attention of a child of the family, until his strength was recovered; and as soon as he was on his legs again, Ama-ketsa furnished him with a horse, some provisions, and sent one of his own sons to conduct him to the whites. Although Hodgens could give the Indians no clue as to where the hunters were encamped, yet on the eighth day they arrived safe and sound at their friends', and as straight as if they had been led by a line to them; which convinced our people that the Indians knew well the place of their retreat. Indeed, in those parts to avoid the Indians would be to avoid their own party.

A party of our people had been out a whole week in search of Hodgens, and found his dead horse, but despairing of finding him they returned to their camp; and all hopes of ever finding Hodgens alive vanished: when he did come, their astonishment was equal to their delight. The friendly conduct of Ama-ketsa towards him was a strong proof of that chief's good-will towards our people. During our friends' stay in this place they had several surprises from the Indians, but they managed matters so well that no more of their horses were stolen.

Here our friends passed a winter of five months, before the fine weather broke in upon them. Then removing to some distance, they commenced their spring hunt, in a part of the country rich in beaver. While here they were visited by several bands of Snakes, chiefly Shirry-dikas; and among others, by Pee-eye-em and Ama-qui-em, with a large squad of followers. The astonishment of these people was great on the day of their arrival, at seeing two hundred and forty beaver caught by the hunters, and brought into camp at the same time.

These two great men were very anxious to know from M'Kenzie whether any of his people had been killed by the Indians during the winter; and being answered in the negative, they appeared much pleased. They were, however, told that one had been lost, but was found. Little did our friends then think what had really happened, or what had incited the Indians to be so inquisitive. It will be remembered that three of the Owhyhees, as well as others, had been fitted out on a little river to hunt beaver, and our people had not heard any tidings of them. These three unfortunate men had all been murdered; this was what the chiefs had heard, and were so anxious about.

As our people were about to start on their homeward journey, the two friendly chiefs expressed an ardent wish to accompany them: "We wish," said they, "to see the Shy-to-gas." Besides seeing the Nez Percés, they thought by accompanying our people to insure a safe return to their lands. Our people, however, did not encourage them to undertake so tedious and hazardous a journey, and so embarrassing to themselves; but M'Kenzie assured them of his speedy return: so after staying about ten days, the chiefs set out to return homeward. Both parties took leave of each other with feelings of respect. As soon as the chiefs went off, our people prepared to start; and in the meantime a party, with an Indian guide, was sent off to pick up and bring to the camp the three Owhyhees already mentioned. They found the place where they had been hunting, and where they had been murdered; the skeleton of one of them was found, but nothing else. The fact that one of their horses had been seen in the possession of the banditti, left no doubt in the minds of our people that they were the murderers.

The season being now well advanced, they had no time to lose; loading therefore one hundred and fifty-four horses with beaver, and turning their faces towards Fort Nez Percés, the whole party commenced its homeward journey, over hills, dales, rocks, and rivers, for twenty-two days' travel, until they reached the long-wished-for Blue Mountains again. Here they spent a couple of days, to rest and refresh their fatigued animals.

Various had been the reports brought to us by the Indians as to the fate of our friends in the Snake country, and as the time of their expected arrival drew near the more anxious of course we became; when one day a cloud of dust arose in the direction in which they were expected, and by the aid of a spy-glass we perceived from four to five hundred horses, escorted by as many riders, advancing at a slow pace, in a line of more than two miles in length, resembling rather a caravan of pilgrims than a trapping party. It was our friends, accompanied by a band of the Cayouse Indians, who had joined them as they emerged from the defiles of the Blue Mountains; and soon after, M'Kenzie, in his leather jacket, and accompanied by two of their chiefs, arrived at the fort.

Nothing could exceed the joy manifested by all parties, and the success attending the expedition surpassed our most sanguine expectations.

This brings our subject up to the 22nd of June, 1820.

After a year's absence and laborious toil, our friends required some rest, and while they are enjoying an interval of repose, we propose to employ ourselves in collecting from their conflicting and imperfect details some further notes and remarks on the Snake country—a country which had become the centre of attraction to all parties connected with the trade.

The general features of the Snake country present a scene incomparably grateful to a mind that delights in varied beauties of landscape and in the manifold works of nature. Lofty mountains, whose summits are in the clouds, rise above wide-extending plains, while majestic waters in endless sinuosities fertilize with their tributary streams a spacious land of green meadows, relieved by towering hills and deep valleys, broken by endless creeks with smiling banks. The union of grandeur and richness, of vastness and fertility in the scenery, fills the mind with emotions that baffle description.

The Rocky Mountains skirting this country on the east, dwindle from stupendous heights into sloping ridges, which divide the country into a thousand luxurious vales, watered by streams which abound with fish. The most remarkable heights in any part of the great backbone of America are three elevated insular mountains, or peaks, which are seen at the distance of one hundred and fifty miles: the hunters very aptly designate them the Pilot Knobs.*

In these parts are likewise found many springs of salt water and large quantities of genuine salt, said to be as strong as any rock salt. South of Lewis River, at the Black Feet Lake, this article is very abundant, and some of it is six inches thick, with a strong crust on the surface. Near the same lake, our people found a small rivulet of sulphurous water, bubbling out from the base of a perpendicular rock more than three hundred feet in height. It was dark blue, and tasted like gunpowder.

Boiling fountains, having different degrees of temperature, were very numerous; one or two were so very hot as to boil meat. In other parts, among the rocks, hot and cold springs might alternately be seen within a hundred yards of each other, differing in their temperature.

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* They are now generally known as the Three Paps, or "Tetons;" and the source of the Great Snake River is in their neighbourhood.

In passing many considerable rivers, the Indian path or footway, instead of leading to a ford, would lead to a natural bridge. Instances of this kind were very frequently met with. One of those bridges was arched over in a most extraordinary manner from one precipice to another, as if executed by the hand of man. It was no uncommon thing to find rivers issuing suddenly out of the earth in the midst of a level plain, continuing a serpentine course for several miles, and then as suddenly entering the earth again. In one of these openings our people set their traps, and at the first lift caught thirty beavers and one or two otters.

Some considerable streams were likewise observed to gush from the faces of precipices, some twenty or thirty feet from their summits; while on the top no water was to be seen. In two or three instances our people heard the noise of water under their feet, as of rapids; yet, for several miles, could not get a drop to drink. That this country contains minerals, there can be but little doubt; many indications of copper, iron, and coal were seen by our hunters.

In many parts the soil is composed of a rich black loam, with indications of marl. This is the case in all the valleys; but in the higher parts, the eye is wearied with the sight of barren plains and leafless rocks.

It had been noticed how abundantly the natives of this quarter of the world are supplied with various kinds of food. The many nutritious roots, berries, and all kinds of uncultivated vegetables which the country produces, suited to the Indian palate, sets starvation at defiance, at all seasons of the year, unless through the negligence of the natives themselves.

The War-are-ree-kas are expert and successful fishermen, and use many ingenious contrivances in catching the salmon; but the principal one is that of spearing. For this purpose, the fisherman generally wades into the water, often up to his waist, and then cautiously watches the ascending fish; the water being clear. He poises and balances his fourteen-feet spear so well, and throws it so adroitly, that he seldom misses his aim. Others, again, erect scaffolds, while many stand on projecting rocks with scoop-nets, and in narrow channels they make wires and form barriers.

With all these methods, and many more, in full operation, and on almost every point, the fish, except in deep water, seldom escape these cunning and dexterous men. From fifty to one hundred persons may be seen, within a short distance of each other, all busily employed in their own particular way. At the same time, the youngsters are not idle, but employed in carrying home the fish to the camp; while the women, old and young, are each at their post, cleaning and preparing them for future use, and particularly to meet the urgent demands of a long winter.

It seems that the salmon is not terrified by noise, for, in all these occupations the fishermen call out loudly to each other. The immense quantities of this delicious and nutritive fish caught at even one of these great fish camps might furnish all London with a breakfast; and, although many hundred miles from the ocean, our people affirmed that it still retains its richness and flavour. From the skill of the natives in curing salmon, the fish continue, at all seasons of the year, sweet and in good condition. They are dried slowly in sheds covered above, to exclude the rays of the sun.

Yet with all this quantity of salmon, and buffalo in equal profusion, and of vegetables before them, so depraved is the appetite of the savage, that he has often recourse, by way of change or variety, to the most nauseous and disgusting articles of food. The latter are, perhaps, not more pernicious to health than many of the highly-seasoned and deleterious dishes used among ourselves; and are, no doubt, as delicate and palatable to the taste of the rude savage, as the others are to the taste and palate of the polished member of civilised society. The Snakes feast on the most loathsome reptiles, such as serpents, mice, and lice. The curiosity of our people was often attracted by their singular mode of diet. Beneath the shade of the bushes is found an enormous kind of cricket; skipping in the sun are good-sized grasshoppers; and gigantic mounds of pismires of enormous growth are likewise very frequent: all these insects are made subservient to the palate of the Snake Indian.

These delicacies are easily collected in quantity, and when brought to the camp they are thrown into a spacious dish along with a heap of burning cinders, then tossed to and fro for some time until they are roasted to death; under which operation they make a crackling noise, like grains of gunpowder dropped into a hot frying-pan. They are then either eaten dry, or kept for future use, as circumstances may require. In the latter case a few handfulls are frequently thrown into a boiling kettle to thicken the soup; one of our men had the curiosity to taste this mixture, and said that he found it most delicious. Every reptile or insect that the country produces is, after the same manner, turned economically to account to meet the palate of the Snake Indian. But there is no accounting for tastes. I have seen the whites, in a camp teeming with buffalo, fowl, fish, and venison, longing for horseflesh, and even purchasing a horse, in order to feast upon it. Nor is it uncommon in these parts to see the voyageurs leave their rations of good venison, and eat dogs' flesh. But the reader will cease to be surprised at these things, when we mention the fact that the people in this country, habituated as they are to such things, live almost as the Indians, eating everything at times that can be eaten; some from choice, others from necessity.

Various herbs, shrubs, and plants are to be found; some of them highly esteemed by the natives for their healing qualities. Having stated that the Snakes prefer their own tobacco to ours, we now proceed to speak of that plant. The Snake tobacco plant grows low, is of a brownish colour, and thrives in most parts of the country, but flourishes best in sandy or barren soil; it grows spontaneously, and is a good substitute for other tobacco, having the same aromatic flavour and narcotic effect as ours. It is weaker than our tobacco; but the difference in strength may be owing to the mode of manufacturing it for use. For this purpose, their only process is to dry it, and then rub it between the hands, or pound it with stones, until it is tolerably fine. In this state it almost resembles green tea. In smoking, it leaves a gummy taste or flavour in the mouth.

Our people, however, seemed to like it very well, and often observed that with it they would never ask for any other; yet with all their fondness for the Snake tobacco, I observed that the moment they reached the fort, the Snake importation was either bartered away or laid aside: one and all applied to me for the good old twist. The Snakes would often bring their tobacco to our people for sale; but generally in small parcels, sometimes an ounce or two, sometimes a quart, and sometimes as much as a gallon. In their bartering propensities, however, they would often make our friends smile to see them with a beaver skin in one hand, and a small bag containing perhaps a pint of the native tobacco in the other; the former they would offer for a paper looking-glass, worth twopence; while for the latter they would often demand an axe worth four or five shillings.

There is a fabulous story current among these people, and universally believed, that they were the first smokers of tobacco on the earth, and that they have been in the habit of using it from one generation to another, since the world began; that all other Indians learned to smoke, and had their tobacco first from them; that the white people's tobacco is only good for the whites, and that if they should give the preference to the white people's tobacco and give up smoking their own, it would then cease to grow on their lands, and a deleterious weed would grow up in its place and poison them all.

Although these people display an absurd degree of ignorance in trade, they are, nevertheless, very ingenious. Their ingenuity, in many instances, shows them to be in advance of their Columbia neighbours; as for example, their skill in pottery. The clays to be found all over their native soil are of excellent quality, and have not been overlooked by them. They, of all the tribes west of the mountains, exhibit the best, if not the only, specimens of skill, as potters, in making various kinds of vessels for their use and convenience. Our people saw kettles of cylindrical form, a kind of jug, and our old-fashioned jars of good size, and not altogether badly turned about the neck, having stoppers. These jars serve to carry water when on long journeys over parched plains. They are likewise used for holding fish, oil, and grease, and constitute a very great accommodation for domestic purposes. These vessels, although rude and without gloss, are nevertheless strong, and reflect much credit on Indian ingenuity.

While travelling in the Snake country our friends were often at a loss how to get across the different rivers, that barred their way even about the Indian camps, from the singular fact that the Snakes never make use of canoes: they are the only Indians we know of who derive their living chiefly from the waters and are without them. Nor could our people assign any reason or learn the cause. Among all other fishing tribes, the canoe is considered indispensable. When the Snakes had occasion to cross any river, a machine constructed of willows and bulrushes, was hastily put together in the form of a raft. This clumsy practice is always resorted to, although it is a dangerous mode of conveyance. Our people had frequently narrow escapes. At one time, in crossing the main river on a raft of this description, they happened to get entangled, and were in the utmost danger of perishing; when some Snakes plunged in to their relief, and after disentangling them, swam the raft to shore: they were for more than an hour beyond their depth, notwithstanding it was at a period of the year when the river was partly frozen over.

It was amusing to listen to the miraculous tales of our people of the manner in which the Snakes eluded their grasp. When passing through the meadows and flats of long grass, they would often perceive at a distance a person walking; and on these occasions, if they ran to see who it was, after reaching the place and looking for some time around, they would perceive to their astonishment the object of their search as far from them in an opposite direction; not satisfied they would start again, but to no purpose: the person would again and again appear in another direction, as if playing at hide and seek.

The moment a Snake perceives any one pursue him, he squats down among the grass; then, instead of running forward to avoid his pursuer, he runs backward as if to meet him; taking care, however, to avoid him; so that by the time his pursuer gets to where he first saw the Snake, the Snake is back at the place from whence his pursuer started! In the art of instantaneous concealment, and of changing places, they are very remarkable. They are very appropriately called Snakes. These remarks, however, apply to the Ban-at-tees also.

Return we now to the trappers, whom we left enjoying themselves for a few days after their return from the Snake country. After delivering up their furs to me, it was found that they had increased our annual returns to nearly double what they were a few years before, with but little additional expense. Thus exemplifying the wise policy of extending the trade into the Snake country.

The trappers, consisting of seventy men, being fitted out anew, M'Kenzie and his party were again at their post, and turning their faces once more round to the Snake country they left fort Nez Percés on the 4th day of July, after a short stay of only twelve days.

We now introduce another portion of our narrative; and, in doing so, we must, in order to render our subject as intelligible as possible, take a retrospective view of the scenes that took place between the two rival Companies in 1816.

The courts of justice in Canada have jurisdiction over all criminal offenders in this country; consequently, all the parties guilty, or suspected of being guilty, belonging either to the North-West or to the Hudson's Bay Companies during the hostile feuds, were sent thither for trial. We now lay before our readers the result of those trials.

As soon as it was rumoured abroad that an investigation into the rights of parties, or the safety of individuals, was about to take place, many of the North-West managers were much perplexed.

Expedients were resorted to, and every artifice that could be devised was put in requisition, to defeat the ends of justice; or rather to screen themselves from guilt. The chief outrages that had been perpetrated were committed, not by the ruling powers, but by their subordinates; many of whom were, in consequence, hastily got out of the way: the remote posts of the north, as well as of the Columbia, had the benefit of their company. Those who could not be conveniently disposed of in this way were sent off among the Indians for a time, so that when the various indictments were exhibited in the courts of law against individuals, no evidence could be found to convict or prove any of them guilty: this has been, and always will be, the case in a country so remote from civilisation and the seat of justice.

When all was done in Canada that could be done, the main features of the case remained just as they were, without being advanced or bettered, by a protracted investigation of four years. The Hudson's Bay Company still maintained their right of exclusive trade in and sovereignty over Rupert's Land; the North-West Company, on the other hand, disputed that right, and continued to trade in Rupert's Land, carrying off the largest portion of its productions in furs and peltries. Eminent lawyers were employed on both sides to solve the disputed points, and gave opinions favourable to their respective clients; but those opinions produced no other effect than to convince the rival Companies of the folly of carrying on a contest which threatened bankruptcy to both. The costs of the North-West Company alone amounted to the enormous sum of 55,000*l.* sterling.

From litigation the parties had recourse to mediation, and the result of the negotiation was a union of the two Companies into one, by a "deed-poll," bearing date the 26th day of March, 1821. The deed-poll provides, among other things, that the trade heretofore carried on by both parties separately shall in future be carried on "exclusively, for 21 years, in the name of the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay;" or, in other words, "the Hudson's Bay Company." By this arrangement the North-West Company merged into the Hudson's Bay Company. The deed-poll may be very good, and so may the charter; but we should have liked it much better after all the evils we have witnessed arising from doubts and disputes, had the charter itself been stamped with the authority of the three estates, King, Lords, and Commons: this would have most effectually set the question at rest for ever, and put all doubt as to the legality or illegality of the charter out of question. The junction of the two Companies saved Rupert's Land from anarchy in the day of troubles.

The downfall of the North-West Company cast a gloom over its numerous train of retainers and

Canadian dependents, also over the whole savage race from Montreal to the Rocky Mountains, and from the Rocky Mountains to the Frozen Ocean—a range of country greater in extent than the distance from Canada to England. The Company of which we are now speaking was, during its prosperity, the life and soul of the French Canadians; and the French Canadians were always great favourites with the Indians: no wonder, then, that a deep sympathy should be manifested on its ruin!

All those persons connected with the late North-West Company whose promotion was prior to the date of the "deed-poll," were therein provided for, whereas all those expectants whose time of promotion ran beyond that period were excluded; but some of the latter party were provided for by a pecuniary remuneration, and among this last class it was my lot to fall, for my promotion did not come on till 1822. On this occasion a letter from the Honourable William M'Gillivray put me in possession of the fact, "that 500*l.* sterling had been placed to my credit in their books." But I never received a penny of it.

Being thus released from the North-West Company, I had to begin the world anew; this being the third time in the course of my adventures. Still following, however, the irresistible propensity of my inclination to see more of the Indian country, I immediately entered the service of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company; but for two years only.

My prospects in the Pacific Fur Company were but short lived, and my hopes vanished like a dream. In the North-West Company seven more years of my life had gone by, and with them my prospects. There is a singular coincidence between both disappointments; for had not the American Company failed in 1813, my promotion would have taken place in 1814; so, in like manner, had not the North-West become extinct in 1821, I should have realised expectations in 1822.

The high standing of the late North-West Company induced all those in any way connected therewith, to deposit their savings in the house of M'Gillivray, Thain, and Company, the then head of the concern; and every one having money there considered it just as safe as if it had been in the Bank of England. But the wild and profuse expenditure consequent on keeping a horde of retainers during the law contest of four years sank the house in debt, and it became insolvent, which unfortunate circumstance deprived many individuals of all their hard earnings. My loss amounted to 1400*l*., which left me almost penniless.

While these changes were going on, who should arrive in health and high spirits at Nez Percés, after another year's absence, but M'Kenzie from the Snake country, on the 10th July, 1821, with an increase of returns, and the good fortune of not having lost a man. At this period his contract of five years had expired, and the object of his mission was fully accomplished; but being too late in the season to get out of the country, he passed the winter with me at Fort Nez Percés, and crossed the Rocky Mountains in the autumn of 1822.

Although somewhat foreign to our subject, we may be permitted to follow this enterprising and indefatigable adventurer a little further. The man who but a few years before had been thought fit only to eat horseflesh and shoot at a mark, was now, from his perseverance and success in recovering a losing trade, become so popular among all parties in the fur trade, that we find him snugly placed in the new "deed-poll" as a sachem of the higher class. Consequently, instead of wending his way to Canada, after crossing the mountains, he shaped his course to the Council at York Factory. Nor had he been long there before he was raised a step higher, by being appointed Governor of Red River Colony, the highest post in the country next to the Governor-in-Chief; which honourable station he held with great credit to himself, and satisfaction to the public, for a period of nearly ten years. Availing himself of his rotation at the end of that period, he made a tour through the United States, and during that tour purchased a small estate delightfully situated near Lake Erie, called Mayville; then returning to Red River for his family, he retired from the service, and left the country altogether, going to spend the remainder of his days at his rural seat of Mayville, in the States of New York.

Mr. M'Kenzie was eminently fitted, both in corporeal and mental qualities, for the arduous and very often dangerous labour of conducting the business of his employers in regions hitherto but rarely trodden by the foot of the civilised man, and among tribes as fickle and capricious in their disposition, as they were fierce and barbarous in their manners. Capable of enduring fatigue and privations, no labour appeared too great, no hardships too severe. Bold and decided in the presence of danger, he was peculiarly adapted to strike awe into the breast of the savage; who has an instinctive reverence for manly daring. Nor was he destitute of those less striking qualities which win but do not awe mankind. Intimately acquainted with the disposition of the savages he had to deal with, he could adopt measures amongst them which to others appeared the extreme of folly, and whose successful issue alone could evince that they had been prompted by the deepest sagacity and knowledge of human nature. The instance, already recorded, of his distributing his property among the Indian chiefs, and finding it untouched on his return, after a considerable interval of time, is a sufficient proof of this. But Mr. M'Kenzie, notwithstanding his liberal endowments and education, for he had been designed for the ministry, had a great aversion to writing, preferring to leave the details of his adventures to the pen of others.

To travel a day's journey on snow-shoes was his delight; but he detested spending five minutes scribbling in a journal. His travelling notes were often kept on a beaver skin, written hieroglyphically with a pencil or piece of coal; and he would often complain of the drudgery of keeping accounts. When asked why he did not like to write, his answer was, "We must leave something for others to do." Few men could fathom his mind, yet his inquisitiveness to know the minds and opinions of others had no bounds. Every man he met was his companion; and when not asleep, he was always upon foot, strolling backwards and forwards, full of plans and projects: so peculiar was this pedestrian habit, that he went by the name of "Perpetual Motion."

# CHAPTER IX.

Preliminary observations—Scenes in the Indian country—Reflections—Canadians—Freemen—Habits—Character—Owhyhees on the Columbia—Iroquois in the Indian country—Indian women—Half-breeds—Bourgeois, and his children—Remarks—The last relic—The Bourgeois in his light canoe—Hard travelling—Fort Nez Percés—The war chief—The war horse—Cavalcade—Treatment of slaves—Scalp dancing—Vocabulary of the language—Table of the weather—Direction of the winds—Degrees of heat and cold.

THE last chapter closed the career of the North-West Company with M'Kenzie's adventures in the Snake quarter, and placed the trade of the country in possession of the Hudson's Bay Company. But before we take our leave finally of the North-Westers, there are yet a few fragments left which we propose collecting together, to enable the reader thoroughly to comprehend this subject; and we propose devoting the present chapter to these details.

The branch of mercantile pursuit which confines the trader to a residence for a series of years among savages in the far distant wilds of North America, may appear to some as banishment rather than an appointment of choice in search of competency, which in a variety of ways fortune places more or less within our reach; yet of the persons who have spent any portion of their years in those countries, few or none are known who do not look back with a mixture of fond remembrance and regret on the scenes through which they have passed; preferring the difficulties and dangers of their former precarious but independent habits to all the boasted luxuries and restraints of polished society. In the wilderness they spend a long, active, and healthful life; the table groans with venison, wild fowl, and fish, together with a variety of wild fruits, while the simple element in its purest state is their harmless beverage.

In the frequency of their voyages, the diversity of landscape brings ample food for contemplation and delight. The indispensable discharge of duties in the thronged fort or in the bustling camp, domestic endearments, the making provision for the passing day, the sport of the gun, together with the current events among the tribes, furnish unbounded variety to banish unhappiness and *ennui*.

At the very commencement of the fur trade, however, such advantages were never within the reach of the adventurer, whose hazardous strides first traced out the fertile paths of the Far West. Their strength often proved unequal to their task; yet they had to push on, ignorant of dangers before them, or of obstructions that barred their retreat. They had no settled habitations or fortified holds to shelter them from the tempest, or from the frenzy of the natives. They were ignorant of the languages, customs, and manners of the tribes, whether they were well or ill disposed to them, or lived at peace or war with their neighbours. Without experience it was not possible always to avert the storms ready to burst over their heads; neither was it possible to enjoy tranquillity of mind; and as for comforts, they were unknown. They had, in fact, everything to dread and guard against.

But it must be admitted, that in proportion to the increase in the more essential points of gain, the secondary objects of security, convenience, and comforts have had due attention paid them. And now, establishments of any standing (such as Spokane House was in its day) are by no means wanting in the principal requisites of comfort. It may be said that the trader of this period has only to reap, in each successive year, at ease, the harvest planted for him by those who went before him. It is so now on the Columbia, and with all that range of country lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific. The roads are pointed out to all new-comers; the paths known; the Indians more or less civilised: so that the traders of this day have little left them to do.

From a terror of the hardships endured in the Indian countries, it was seldom that the first adventurers could persuade any persons to follow them who were able to live decently at home. Their associates were consequently taken from the common men, who could not either read or write. But the number of independent fortunes amassed in the Indian fur trade at length attracted the attention of creditable mercantile houses. Companies were formed, and inducements held out to young men of respectable families; many of whom, instead of embarking for the West or East Indies, as had been customary, preferred the road to Canada, in order to join the association which had by this time assumed the title of the North-West Company. These young men did not hesitate to sign indentures as clerks for a period of seven years; and to these were generally attached twice seven more, before such situations became vacant as were to crown their ambition. Hence ordinary men were weeded out of the country, and it is not now strange to find the common Canadian, the half-breed, the civilised Indian, the native of the land, and the man of gentle birth and education, at their respective duties in the same establishment, along the immense chain of communication which extends as far as the Frozen Ocean, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.

The fur trade has a mixture of mercantile and military duties. The clerks have charge of trading posts, according to their merits and abilities; some upon a very considerable scale. They are first taught to obey, afterwards they learn to command; and at all times much is expected of them. It sometimes happens to be long before they receive the charge of a first-rate establishment; but when the general posture of affairs is propitious to their employers, it is not very often that their laudable desires are disappointed. They at length arrive at the long-wished-for goal of partners, and are entitled to a vote in all weighty decisions of the council: they are thenceforth styled Esquires.

The Bourgeois lives in comfort if not luxury. He rambles at his pleasure; enjoys the merry dance, or the pastime of some pleasing game; his morning ride, his fishing-rod, his gun, and his dog, or a jaunt of pleasure to the environs in his gay canoe, occupy his time. In short, no desires remain unfulfilled. He is the greatest man in the land. The buildings belonging to the Company are both neat and commodious; each class being provided with separate abodes. The apartments are appropriately divided into bedrooms, antechambers, and closets. There are also the counting-room, the mess-room, the kitchen, and pantry, the cellars, and Indian hall; together with handsome galleries. Nor can we pass over in silence one chief object of attraction. Even in this barbarous country, woman claims and enjoys her due share of attention and regard. Her presence brightens the gloom of the solitary post; her smiles add a new charm to the pleasures of the wilderness.

Nor are the ladies deficient in those accomplishments which procure admiration. Although descended from aboriginal mothers, many of the females at the different establishments throughout the Indian countries are as fair as the generality of European ladies; the mixture of blood being so many degrees removed from the savage as hardly to leave any trace, while, at the same time, their delicacy of form, their light and nimble movements, and the penetrating expression of the "bright black eye," combine to render them objects of no ordinary interest. They have also made considerable progress in refinement, and, with their natural acuteness and singular talent for imitation, they soon acquire all the ease and gracefulness of polished life. On holidays the dresses are as gay as in longer settled countries; and on these occasions the gentleman puts on the beaver hat, the ladies make a fine show of silks and satins, and even jewellery is not wanting. It is not surprising, therefore, that the roving North-Wester, after so many rural enjoyments, and a residence of twenty years, should feel more real happiness in these scenes than he can hope for in any other country.

Fur traders, from their constant intercourse with Indians, make a free use of tobacco, mixing it, as the Indians do, with a certain herb indigenous to the Indian country; this, with their favourite beverage, strong tea, constitutes their chief luxury, and agrees well with their mode of life. But, whether it be the food, mode of living, or climate, it certainly happens that great longevity is seldom known among them on returning to civilised society.

Indeed, there appears to be some fatality attending wealth acquired in the fur trade. Few, very few, indeed, of the hundreds who have retired from that trade during the last quarter of a century—some with competencies, and some with moderate fortunes—have lived to enjoy their hard earnings. Shut out for so many years from civilised society, and all the endearments of social life, the fur trader is wholly unprepared for the wiles practised by designing persons, to whose devices he easily falls a prey; or perhaps he squanders his means so profusely as to be soon reduced to penury. On the other hand, should he know the value of money, and be of economical habits, yet having spent the best part of his days in a country where money is little used, and where he lived and roamed for so many years without it, he becomes disgusted with a country where nothing can be procured without it, and where its influence is all powerful; consequently, the usages of civilised society have no charms for him, and he begins to pine and sigh for days gone by, never to return. He foresees that his wealth must be left to persons who had no trouble in acquiring it, and who will consequently be less scrupulous in spending it. In fine, whether we look to the kind of life led by the fur trader, or the prospects which such a life holds out to him, we shall find, from his own experience, that the advantages to be derived from it are by no means an adequate compensation for the hardships and privations he has to encounter, and for the sacrifice he had made in renouncing, so early in life, the comforts and privileges to be enjoyed in his native land.

Canadians, it is admitted, are best calculated for the endurance of hardships and expedition in the business of light canoe-men. It is seldom that other men are employed in such arduous labour. Indeed, the Canadians, considered as voyageurs, merit the highest praise.

Another class, however, remain who merit less praise. They are in this country styled Freemen, because they are no longer the hired servants of the Company. These are generally Canadians, or others, who have spent their better days in the quality of canoe-men in the Company's service, but who have not been provident enough to save part of their earnings for the contingencies of old age; and who, sooner than return to their own country to live by hard labour, resolve on passing the remainder of their days in comparative idleness among the natives. It often happens, however, that young men of vicious and indolent habits join them; lost, like the others, to all the ties of kindred, blood, country, and Christianity. These freemen may be considered a kind of enlightened

Indians, with all their faults, but none of their good qualities; and this similarity to the Indians in their vagrant mode of life brings on them the contempt of both whites and natives. Indeed, they become more depraved, more designing, and more subtle than the worst of Indians; and they instruct the simple natives in every evil, to the great detriment of traders: with whom, in consequence, they are never on a friendly footing. They live in tents, or in huts, like the natives, and wander from place to place in search of game, roots, and herbs. Sometimes they live in the utmost abundance; but, as they are not always expert hunters, nor industrious, they have at times to undergo the extremities of want. In this case they are objects of commiseration, and the traders not unfrequently administer to their wants; but such is their ingratitude, that they are seldom known to make them a grateful return.

On account of their rapacity, they do not always maintain a perfect understanding with the tribe to which they are attached; but Indians are so friendly to whites of every description when they throw themselves upon their mercy, that an instance of cruelty to a freeman is seldom or never heard of. They fall victims sometimes to the fury of an opposite or adverse nation at war; but, otherwise, they are by no means an unhappy race, and they commonly live to an advanced age. There cannot be a better test for knowing a worthless and bad character in this country than his wishing to become a freeman—it is the true sign of depravity, either in a wayward youth or backsliding old man. They seldom agree with one another, and are generally scattered amongst the natives by ones and twos only. Collectively, there may be at present about fifty or sixty on the Columbia; but in all other parts of the Company's territories they are far more numerous.

The next class we have to notice are natives of the Sandwich Islands. It was from this people that captains, in their coasting trade, augmented their crews in steering among the dangerous natives from Columbia River to Behring's Straits; and, from this precedent, the inland traders adopted them when their complement of Canadians happened to fall short of their demands. They are submissive to their masters, honest, trustworthy, and willingly perform as much duty as lies in their power; but they are exceedingly awkward in everything they attempt; although they are somewhat industrious, they are not made to lead, but to follow, and are useful only to stand as sentinels, to eye the natives, or go through the drudgery of an establishment.

It has often been found, however, that they are not wanting in courage, particularly against the Indians, for whom they entertain a very cordial contempt; and, if they were let loose against them, they would rush upon them like tigers. The principal purpose for which they were useful on the Columbia was, as an array of numbers in the view of the natives, especially in the frequent voyages up and down the communication; and, doubtless, they might have been found more serviceable had not a dulness on their part, and an impression of their insufficiency on ours, prevented both sides from any great degree of intercourse. Being obtained, however, for almost their bare victuals and clothing, the difference in the expense between them and Canadians forms a sufficient consideration to keep up the custom of employing more or less of this description of men.

The contrast is great between them here and in their own country, where they are all life and activity; for, when I saw them there, I thought them the most active people I had ever seen. This difference in their habits I am inclined to attribute to the difference of climate, their own being favourable to them in a high degree. When we consider the salubrity of the Sandwich Islands, it is hardly to be wondered that the unhappy native, when transplanted to the snows and cold of the Rocky Mountains, should experience a decay of energies. From exposure to the wet and damp prevalent at the mouth of the Columbia, many of them become consumptive, and find their grave in the stranger's land.

The Owhyhees, however, are such expert swimmers, that few of our effects were lost beyond recovery, when accident now and then consigned them to the bottom of the water in our perilous navigations; and it is next to impossible for a person to get drowned if one or more of them are near at hand; for in that element they are as active and expert as they are the reverse on dry land. They habitually testify a fidelity and zeal for their master's welfare and service, highly creditable to them. There are at this time only about a score of these men in the country.

Among the people employed are a set of civilised Indians from the neighbourhood of Montreal, chiefly of the Iroquois nation; at this period they form nearly a third of the number of men employed by the Company on the Columbia. They are expert voyageurs, and especially so in the rapids and dangerous runs in the inland waters, which they either stem or shoot with the utmost skill. The object of introducing them into the service of the traders was to make them act in the double capacity of canoe-men and trappers. They are not esteemed equal to the ablest trappers, nor the best calculated for the voyage. They are not so inoffensive as the Owhyhees, nor to be trusted as the Canadians. They are brought up to religion, it is true, and sing hymns oftener than paddling songs; but those who came here (and we are of course speaking of none else) retain none of its precepts: they are sullen, indolent, fickle, cowardly, and treacherous. And an Iroquois arrived at manhood is still as wayward and extravagant as a lad of other nations at the age of fifteen.

We shall now draw the attention of our readers to another class, the last we propose to notice—Indian women and the half-breeds of the country. About the different establishments, there are some of the natives employed in the capacity of servants; some as out-door drudges, some as cooks, some as fishermen, and some as couriers. They are often found useful among their own tribe or those in the neighbourhood.

In the establishments belonging to the whites, in the Columbia, are many Indian women, as wives to the different classes of people in the employ of the Company. These may be in all about fifty. Some of them have large families; and the tenderness existing between them and their husbands presents one great reason for that attachment which the respective classes of whites cherish for the Indian countries. The vigilance of these women has often been instrumental to the safety of the forts, when the most diabolical combinations were set on foot by the natives.

As it frequently happens that their husbands go home to Canada, with the means of living at their ease, these women must of necessity rejoin their respective tribes; where they generally remain in a state of widowhood during a year or two, in expectation of their return. If the husband does not return, the woman then bestows her hand on one of his comrades who has the good fortune to please her fancy the best.

Habituated to the manners of the whites, they prefer living with them for the rest of their lives, and generally prove faithful to their husbands. They are likewise much attached to their families—a disposition inherent in all Indians. Nor are they wanting in many other qualities necessary to form the good housekeeper; they are tidy, saving, and industrious. When they rejoin their tribe, the whites find them very friendly, and they never fail to influence their connections to the same end. By these means, a close alliance is formed between the traders and the aborigines of the country; which might, by means of their offspring, be instrumental in bringing civilisation among the Indians, were there some wise policy adopted for the government and care of half-breeds, whose destiny it is to be left in indigence by poor parents in this far distant region of the earth.

Some benevolent society would, no doubt, if set on foot, meet with all due encouragement. Ways might be devised, by appointing an agent or guardian to each district of the country, for the due superintendence, maintenance, clothing and education of all such poor children as are left in the Indian countries. I am convinced, from my own experience in these parts, that nothing of the kind could ever work well unless the Hudson's Bay

Company were to take the management of it: that alone would ensure its success. For the promotion of this benevolent design, an appeal is here made to the philanthropic disposition of the Honourable Company, who now preside over that great family of mankind inhabiting a tract of Indian country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Pacific to the Frozen Ocean.

Half-breeds, or, as they are more generally styled, *brulés*, from the peculiar colour of their skin, being of a swarthy hue, as if sun-burnt, as they grow up resemble almost in every respect the pure Indian; with this difference, that they are more designing, more daring, and more dissolute. They are indolent, thoughtless, and improvident; licentious in their habits; unrestrained in their desires; sullen in their disposition; proud, restless, clannish, and fond of flattery. They alternately associate with the whites and the Indians, and thereby become falsely enlightened; acquiring all the bad qualities of both.

But the more unfortunate part of them are those born of wealthy parents, or men holding the rank of gentlemen in the service: such as bourgeois and clerks. These men have often been remarkable for indulging their children; and instead, therefore, of teaching their offspring industry and frugality, they allow them to run about the establishment, learning, among Indians, freemen, voyageurs and others, every vice that can degrade human nature.

The father, however, is a gentleman; the son, forsooth, must be a gentleman too: none so great as he; for he can race horses, run dogs, smoke tobacco, and shoot arrows; but he must not degrade himself with labour. While in the service, all this does very well; but when the father leaves the service, so does the son: they are no longer in the service, but in civilised life. The son looks about, and is disgusted with the drudgery of labour; still hangs about his father; knows nothing, can do nothing; bows and arrows are more congenial than the spade or the hoe, and he longs to get back to the scenes of his boyhood. To get rid of the gentleman's son, therefore, the father sets him up in business, and gives him a portion of his goods; but business he does not understand: his thoughts are still upon bows and arrows. He fails, and falls back again upon his more than half-ruined father. The father dies; the son lays his hands on the root of all evil, and indulges for a time in wasteful extravagance. The father is scarcely yet cold in his grave, when the last shilling is gone, and the son an outcast.

It sometimes happens that a promising youth is sent home. Five hundred pounds are spent on his education, and the accomplishments of drawing, music and dancing are added. He returns to the country again: for they must all get back to the land of their nativity. He tries his fortune one way, tries it another; but the qualifications and the restraints necessary to succeed in business are disagreeable to him; he gets tired, and descends from respectable society. His learning becomes useless; he tries his bows and arrows again, but has forgotten even that aboriginal accomplishment, and is lost in the crowd.

Many bad consequences arise from the customary mode of abandoning half-breed children. It degrades white men in the eyes of the natives. By far the greater part of those who are employed in this quarter, from Montreal, are in reality nothing else but half-breeds; with this difference, however, that they are more knowing in mischief, but less skilled than the others in the requisite occupations of the land.

We shall now bring to view their better qualities. Half-breed children, instructed in the principles of religion and morality, and taught at an early age some useful trade, would doubtless prove an ornament to society. They are frequently endued with the most lively apprehension, and are naturally ingenious, hardy, and enterprising. They are by far the fittest persons for the Indian countries, and the best calculated by nature for going among Indians; they are insinuating, and not unfit instruments to mollify their countrymen and teach them the great end of civilisation. They are naturally of an acute understanding, are expert horsemen, active woodsmen, noted marksmen, able hunters. They surpass all Indians at the chase; they are vigorous, brave; and, while they possess the shrewdness and sagacity of the whites, they inherit the agility and expertness of the savage.

It is a misfortune that those who might otherwise be calculated to shine in various spheres of civilised life should thus be lost to their country, and the more deplorable, since it is in our power to make them useful. And, for aught we know, there may be Nelsons, there may be Wellingtons, whose talents lie buried in the listlessness and obscurity of the dreary waste.

Of this class, the first child, a male, was born at Columbia on the 24th day of January, 1812. I notice the circumstance now, as it may, in a new country like this, become, on some future day, matter of history.

Children from the Indian countries do not generally turn out well in civilised society. Those, however, brought up among the lower classes seem to thrive the best: their genius, their habits, and their ideas, it would appear, correspond best with that sphere of life.

We now come to notice the last relic of the North-West Company—the universal idol of its day—the light canoe, the chief gratification to a north-west proprietor, the person of highest rank in the Indian countries. The Canadians, or voyageurs, dignify their master by the name of Bourgeois,—a term handed down from the days of the French in the province of Canada.

The bourgeois is carried on board his canoe upon the back of some sturdy fellow generally appointed for this purpose. He seats himself on a convenient mattress, somewhat low in the centre of his canoe; his gun by his side, his little cherubs fondling around him, and his faithful spaniel lying at his feet. No sooner is he at his ease, than his pipe is presented by his attendant, and he then begins smoking, while his silken banner undulates over the stern of his painted vessel. Then the bending paddles are plied, and the fragile craft speeds through the currents with a degree of fleetness not to be surpassed;—yell upon yell from the hearty crew proclaiming their prowess and skill.

A hundred miles performed, night arrives; the hands jump out quickly into the water, and their nabob and his companions are supported to *terra firma*. A roaring fire is kindled and supper is served; his honour then retires to enjoy his repose. At dawn of day they set out again; the men now and then relax their arms, and light their pipes; but no sooner does the headway of the canoe die away, than they renew their labours and their chorus: a particular voice being ever selected to lead the song. The guide conducts the march.

At the hour of breakfast they put ashore on some green plot. The tea-kettle is boiling; a variegated mat is spread, and a cold collation set out. Twenty minutes—and they start anew. The dinner-hour arrives. They put aground again. The liquor-can accompanies the provision-basket; the contents are quickly set forth in simple style; and, after a refreshment of twenty minutes more, off they set again, until the twilight checks their progress.

When it is practicable to make way in the dark, four hours is the voyageurs' allowance of rest; and at times, on boisterous lakes and bold shores, they keep for days and nights together on the water, without intermission, and without repose. They sing to keep time to their paddles; they sing to keep off drowsiness, caused by their fatigue; and they sing because the bourgeois likes it.

Through hardships and dangers, wherever he leads, they are sure to follow with alacrity and cheerfulness—over mountains and hills, along valleys and dales, through woods and creeks, across lakes and rivers. They look not to the right, nor to the left; they make no halt in foul or fair weather. Such is their skill, that they venture to sail in the midst of waters like oceans, and, with amazing aptitude, they shoot down the most frightful rapids; and they generally come off safely.

When about to arrive at the place of their destination, they dress with neatness, put on their plumes, and a chosen song is raised. They push up against the beach, as if they meant to dash the canoe into splinters; but most adroitly back their paddles at the right moment, whilst the foreman springs on shore and, seizing the prow, arrests the vessel in its course. On this joyful occasion, every person advances to the waterside, and great guns are fired to announce the bourgeois' arrival. A general shaking of hands takes place, as it often happens that people have not met for years: even the bourgeois goes through this mode of salutation with the meanest. There is, perhaps, no country where the ties of affection are more binding than here. Each addresses his comrades as his brothers; and all address themselves to the bourgeois with reverence, as if he were their father.

From every distant department of the Company, a special light canoe is fitted out annually, to report their transactions. The one from the Columbia sets out from the Pacific Ocean the 1st of April, and, with the regularity and rapidity of a steamboat, it reaches Fort William, on Lake Superior, the 1st of July; remaining there till the 20th of that month, when it takes its departure back, and, with an equal degree of precision, arrives at Fort George, at the mouth of the Columbia River, on the 20th October.

A light canoe, likewise, leaving the Pacific, reaches Montreal in a hundred days; and one from Montreal to the Pacific in the same space of time: thus performing a journey of many thousand miles, without delay, stoppage, or scarcely any repose, in the short period of little more than six months.

Having now concluded our remarks on the different classes of whites, of half-breeds, and others, connected with the trade of this country, we resume the subject of Fort Nez Percés quarter.

The different Indian tribes inhabiting the country about Fort Nez Percés often go to wár on their southern neighbours the Snakes, but do not follow war as a profession. They, likewise, frequently go to the buffalo-hunt, as the Flatheads and others west of the mountains do. They are inhabitants of the plains, live by the chase, and are generally known and distinguished by the name of "black robes," in contradistinction to those who live on fish. They are easily known from their roving propensities, their dress, cleanliness, and independence. Being rich in horses, they seldom walk on foot; they are expert hunters, good warriors, and are governed by far more powerful and influential chiefs than any of the other tribes on the Columbia.

We do not intend to follow them through all the varied scenes of their warlike exploits,—for that has already been more or less done in our remarks on the Snake country; yet that the reader may have a more correct idea of their habits and general appearance on such occasions we shall first present him with a short description of a warrior and his horse, ready accoutred for a war expedition; pointing out to him their general treatment of slaves taken in war; and conclude the subject of our remarks in this chapter with a brief vocabulary of their language.

The tribes of Fort Nez Percés we have enumerated already; on the present occasion, we shall more particularly direct the reader's attention to the Wallawalla, the Cayouse, and the Shaw-ha-ap-ten tribes. The last mentioned is the Chappunish of Lewis and Clarke. First, then, as to the war chief's head-dress—a matter of great importance. It consists of the entire skin of a wolf's head, with the ears standing erect, fantastically adorned with bears' claws, birds' feathers, trinkets and bells. The next item is a wreath of curiously-studded feathers, resembling a ruff or peacock's tail, which is entwined round the cranium, and hangs down the back to the ground like a banner; when the chief is on horseback, it floats six or seven feet in the air. The loss of this is the loss of honour. The price of a first-rate war head-dress is two horses. The body is clothed with a shirt, or garment of thin-dressed leather, cut and chequered into small holes, and painted or tattooed with a variety of devices. A black leathern girdle strapped tightly round the waist confines the garment, and holds the mystical medicine bag and decorated calumet—articles, in the chief's estimation, of no ordinary value. His weapons are the gun, the lance, the scalping-knife, and a bulky quiver of arrows. Although thus accoutred, he appears nowise embarrassed; indeed, one must actually see a warrior to believe with what dexterity and ease he can use each weapon, and how nimbly he can change one for another, as occasion may require.

Next comes the favourite war-horse; a description of which will convey but a faint idea of the reality. Although horses are generally cheap and easily purchased by the natives, yet no price will induce an Indian chief to part with his war-horse. Those entirely white are preferred; next to white, the speckled, or white and black, are most in demand. Generally, all horses of these fancy colours are claimed by the chiefs, in preference to any other, and are, therefore, double or treble the value of others. As much pains is bestowed to adorn, paint, and caparison a war-horse as a warrior himself. On the occasion I am now describing, the horse was a pure white. After painting the animal's body all over, and drawing a variety of hieroglyphic devices, the head and neck were dappled with streaks of red and yellow; the mane dyed black, the tail red, clubbed up in a knot, and tied short; to this knot was appended two long streamers of feathers, sewed to a leather thong by means of sinews; the feathers, which reached the ground, forming as it were two artificial tails, which, in addition to ornament, served the rider to lay hold of while in the act of crossing rivers. A bunch of feathers as big as a broom, standing some twenty inches above the ears, ornamented the horse's head; and the rider, as well as the horse, was so besmeared with red, blue, and yellow ochre, that no one could tell what the natural colour of either was.

Five or six hundred men, thus mounted and armed, present a somewhat grand and imposing appearance, when, a few days before setting out on these expeditions, the whole cavalcade parade and manœuvre about their camp. But the most interesting part of the scene is not yet told. On one occasion, I went purposely to see them. One of the principal chiefs, at the commencement, mounted on horseback and took up his stand on an eminence near the camp, while at the same time the whole troop, mounted in fighting order, assembled in a group around him. After this chief had harangued them for some time, they all started off at a slow trot, but soon increased their pace to a gallop, and from a gallop to a full race, the cleverest fellow taking the lead. In this manner they went round the tents. During all the time silence prevailed within the camp: while the horsemen continued shouting or yelling, and went through all the attitudes peculiar to savages.

At one moment, they threw themselves to the right, the next to the left side of the horse, twisting and bending their bodies in a thousand different ways; now in the saddle, then out of the saddle, and nothing frequently to be seen but the horses, as if without riders, parrying or evading, according to their ideas, the onset of their assailants. I could very easily conceive that the ral merit of the manœuvres was not who could kill most of his enemies, but who could save himself best in battle. So dexterous and nimble were they in changing positions, and slipping from side to side, that it was done in the twinkling of an eye. As soon as the manœuvring was over, they were again harangued, and dismissed.

The subject next to be considered is the treatment of the slaves taken in war. On their return from an expedition, the war-party keep in a body, and observe the same order as at starting, until they reach home; when, if successful, their shouting, yelling, and chaunting the war-song fill the air. The sound no sooner reaches the camp, than the whole savage horde, young and old, male and female, sally forth; not, however, to welcome the arrival of their friends, but to glut their desire of implacable revenge by the most barbarous cruelties on the unfortunate captives, who are considered as slaves and treated as such.

The slaves, as is customary on such occasions, are tied on horseback, each behind a warrior. But the squaws no sooner meet them, then they tear them down from the horses without mercy, and then begin trampling on them, tearing their heads and flesh, cutting their ears, and maiming their bodies with knives, stones, sticks or other instruments of torture. After thus glutting their revenge, they drive the slaves to the camp.

It is then settled unalterably what the slaves are doomed to suffer. Every afternoon, some hours before sunset, the camp makes a grand turn out for dancing the scalps. For this dance, two rows of men, a hundred yards long or more, arrange themselves face to face, and about fifteen feet apart. Inside these, are likewise two rows of women, facing each other, leaving a space of about five feet broad in the middle for the slaves; who, arranged in a line, occupy the centre in a row by themselves. Here the unfortunate victims, male and female, are stationed with long poles in their hands and naked above the waist, while on the ends of these poles are exhibited the scalps of their murdered relations. The dancing and chorus then commence; the whole assemblage keeping time to the beat of a loud and discordant sort of drum. The parties all move side ways, to the right and left alternately, according to the Indian fashion. The slaves, at the same time, moving and keeping time with the others. Every now and then a general halt takes place, when the air resounds with loud shouts of joy, and yell upon yell proclaim afar their triumph.

All this is but a prelude to the scenes that follow. The women, placed in the order we have stated, on each side of the slaves, and armed with the instruments of torture, continue jeering them with the most distorted grimaces, cutting them with knives, piercing them with awls, pulling them by the hair, and thumping them with fist, stick or stone, in every possible way that can torment, without killing them. The loss of an ear, a tooth, the joint of a finger, or part of a scalp torn off during these frantic fits, are nightly occurrences. And if the wretches thus doomed to suffer, happen not to laugh and huzza (which in their situation would almost be beyond the efforts of human nature) or if they fail to raise or lower, according to caprice, the scalps in regular order, they are doubly tormented and unmercifully handled.

On these occasions, some termagant often pounces upon her victim, who not unfrequently falls senseless to the ground under the infliction of wounds. And if any slave happens, from a sudden blow, to start back a little out of line, a woman in the rear instantly inflicts another wound, which never fails to urge the same victim as far forward; so that they are often pushed backwards and forwards, till at last they become insensible.

The men, however, take no part in these cruelties; but are mere silent spectators: they never interfere, nor does one of them during the dancing menace or touch a slave: all the barbarities are perpetrated by the women. These are the only examples I have ever witnessed among savages, of women outdoing the men in acts of inhumanity, or where sympathy is not regarded as a virtue by the sex. But then, we must take into consideration that it is a part of the law of the tribes: it is a duty which the females, according to the customs of war, are bound to perform.

When these acts of savage life happen near the establishments, curiosity occasionally induces the whites to attend; and on one occasion I stood for some time looking on; but as I could do nothing but pity, I soon withdrew from the heart-rending scene. At dusk, the dancing ceases, and the slaves are thenceforth conveyed to the camp, washed, dressed, fed, comfortably lodged, and kindly treated, until the usual hour of dancing the following day arrives, when the same routine of cruelties is gone through. This course is generally persisted in for five or six days, without intermission, and then discontinued altogether. From that time, the slaves are no longer considered in the camp as common property, but are placed under the care of their respective masters, and subject only to them. Their treatment ever after is generally as good as could be expected, and is often according to their own merit; they are nevertheless at all times subject to be bought, sold, and bartered away, in the same manner as any other article of property belonging to the owner.

# APPENDIX.

Vocabulary of the Languages spoken by the Nez Percés and other Tribes inhabiting the Country about the Great Forks of Columbia River.

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| One | Laughs. |
| Two | Napete. |
| Three | Melapte. |
| Four | Peenapte. |
| Five | Puchate. |
| Six | O' E' Laughs. |
| Seven | O' E' Napete. |
| Eight | O' E' Melapte. |
| Nine | Tsoomas. |
| Ten | Poutume. |
| Eleven | Poutume ach Laughs. |
| Twelve | Poutume ach Napete. |
| Thirteen | Poutume ach Melapte. |
| Fourteen | Poutume ach Peenapte. |
| Fifteen | Poutume ach Puchate. |
| Sixteen | Poutume ach O' E' Laughs. |
| Seventeen | Poutume ach O' E' Napete. |
| Eighteen | Poutume ach O' E' Melapte. |
| Nineteen | Poutume ach Tsoomas. |

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| Twenty . . . | . Naptate. |
| Twenty-one . . | . Naptate ach Laughs. |
| Twenty-two . . | . Naptate ach Napete. |
| Twenty-three . . | . Naptate ach Melapte. |
| Twenty-four . . | . Naptate ach Peenapte. |
| Twenty-five . . | . Naptate ach Puchate. |
| Twenty-six . . | . Naptate ach O' E' Laughs. |
| Twenty-seven . . | . Naptate ach O' E' Napete. |
| Twenty-eight . . | . Naptate ach O' E' Melapte. |
| Twenty-nine . . | . Naptate ach Tsoomass. |
| Thirty . . . | . Melaptate. |
| Thirty-one . . | . Melaptate ach Laughs. |
| Thirty-two . . | . Melaptate ach Napete. |
| Thirty-three . . | . Melaptate ach Melapte. |
| Thirty-four . . | . Melaptate ach Peenapte. |
| Thirty-five . . | . Melaptate ach Puchate. |
| Thirty-six . . . | . Melaptate ach O' E' Laughs. |
| Thirty-seven . . | . Melaptate ach O' E' Napete. |
| Thirty-eight . . | . Melaptate ach O' E' Melapte. |
| Thirty-nine . . | . Melaptate ach Tsoomass. |
| Forty . . . | . Peenaptate. |
| Forty-one . . . | . Peenaptate ach Laughs. |
| Forty-two . . . | . Peenaptate ach Napete. |
| Forty-three . . | . Peenaptate ach Melapte. |
| Forty-four . . | . Peenaptate ach Peenapte. |
| Forty-five . . . | . Peenaptate ach Puchate. |
| Forty-six . . . | . Peenaptate ach O' E' Laughs. |
| Forty-seven . . | . Peenaptate ach O' E' Napete. |
| Forty-eight . . | . Peenaptate ach O' E' Melapte. |
| Forty-nine . . | . Peenaptate ach Tsoomass. |
| Fifty . . . | . Puchaptate. |
| Fifty-one . . . | . Puchaptate ach Laughs. |
| Fifty-two . . . | . Puchaptate ach Napete. |
| Fifty-three . . | . Puchaptate ach Melapte. |
| Fifty-four . . . | . Puchaptate ach Peenapte. |
| Fifty-five . . . | . Puchaptate ach Puchate. |
| Fifty-six . . . | . Puchaptate ach O' E' Laughs. |
| Fifty-seven . . | . Puchaptate ach O' E' Napete |

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| Fifty-eight . . . | Pechaptate ach O' E' Melapte. |
| Fifty-nine . . . | Pechaptate ach Tsoomaas. |
| Sixty . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate. |
| Sixty-one . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate ach Laughs. |
| Sixty-two . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate ach Napete. |
| Sixty-three . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate ach Melapte. |
| Sixty-four . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate ach Peenapte. |
| Sixty-five . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate ach Puchate. |
| Sixty-six . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate ach O' E' Laughs. |
| Sixty-seven . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate ach O' E' Napete. |
| Sixty-eight . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate ach O' E' Melapte. |
| Sixty-nine . . . | O' E' Laughsaptate ach Tsoomaas. |
| Seventy . . . | O' E' Naptate. |
| Seventy-one . . . | O' E' Naptate ach Laughs. |
| Seventy-two . . . | O' E' Naptate ach Napete. |
| Seventy-three . . . | O' E' Naptate ach Melapte. |
| Seventy-four . . . | O' E' Naptate ach Peenapte. |
| Seventy-five . . . | O' E' Naptate ach Puchate. |
| Seventy-six . . . | O' E' Naptate ach O' E' Laughs. |
| Seventy-seven . . . | O' E' Naptate ach O' E' Napete. |
| Seventy-eight . . . | O' E' Naptate ach O' E' Melapte. |
| Seventy-nine . . . | O' E' Naptate ach O' E' Tsoomaas. |
| Eighty . . . | O' E' Melaptate. |
| Eighty-one . . . | O' E' Melaptate ach Laughs. |
| Eighty-two . . . | O' E' Melaptate ach Napete. |
| Eighty-three . . . | O' E' Melaptate ach Melapte. |
| Eighty-four . . . | O' E' Melaptate ach Peenapte. |
| Eighty-five . . . | O' E' Melaptate ach Puchate. |
| Eighty-six . . . | O' E' Melaptate ach O' E' Laughs. |
| Eighty-seven . . . | O' E' Melaptate ach O' E' Napete. |
| Eighty-eight . . . | O' E' Melaptate ach O' E' Melapte. |
| Eighty-nine . . . | O' E' Melaptate ach Tsoomaas. |
| Ninety . . . | Tsoomaasaptate. |
| Ninety-one . . . | Tsoomaasaptate ach Laughs. |
| Ninety-two . . . | Tsoomaasaptate ach Napete. |
| Ninety-three . . . | Tsoomaasaptate ach Melapte. |
| Ninety-four . . . | Tsoomaasaptate ach Peenapte. |
| Ninety-five . . . | Tsoomaasaptate ach Puchate. |

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| Ninety-six | Tsoomassaptate ach O' E' Laughs. |
| Ninety-seven | Tsoomassaptate ach O' E' Napete. |
| Ninety-eight | Tsoomassaptate ach O' E' Melapte. |
| Ninety-nine | Tsoomassaptate ach Tsoomass. |
| One hundred | Poutaptate. |
| One thousand | Poutume Poutaptate. |
| Man | Kewas. |
| Wife | Asham. |
| Husband | Hammah. |
| Woman | Eyatt. |
| White people | Alinmah. |
| Indians | Tannap. |
| Boy | Tachnuteem. |
| Girl | Tochanough. |
| Relations | Petaugh. |
| Neighbours | Waylate. |
| Son-in-law | Apehut. |
| Brother | Iswhip. |
| Son | Emeats. |
| Child | Meanass. |
| Enemy | Shewaneigh. |
| Stranger | Shewaniah. |
| Slave | Aswaneigh. |
| I myself | En. |
| You or thou | Emyou. |
| Head | Tylpee. |
| Hair | Tootanick. |
| Nose | Nushno. |
| Eyes | Shelaw. |
| Heart | Tumnah. |
| Cheeks | Aucigh. |
| Face | Mutsick. |
| Teeth | Tit. |
| Neck | Tauuatte. |
| Hand | Eyepap. |
| Side | Yoe. |
| Belly | Allot. |
| Knee | Kashly. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Leg | Higheno. |
| Foot | Washaw. |
| That | Eatsheen. |
| Far off | Wayatt. |
| This side | Its enenick. |
| Other side | Queenick. |
| Dead | Patilš eweah. |
| That 's mine | Ke enemi. |
| Cherries | Toomoos. |
| Buttons | Taillip te tisillip. |
| Rings | Sapwhill kass. |
| Awl | Ecestea. |
| Flint | Is whoukas. |
| Tobacco | Towaugh. |
| White | Chychy. |
| Black | Tsemaugh tsemaugh. |
| Yellow | Muckas. |
| Brass | Muckas muckas. |
| Large | Intsee. |
| Small | Waptay. |
| Yes | Eh. |
| No | Wastown. |
| How many | Milth. |
| Great many | Loweigh. |
| It is done | Tlaugh. |
| Empty | Tallach. |
| Enough | A owe. |
| Horse | She came. |
| Cut horse | Tallow noot. |
| Bridle | E' Peacha. |
| Stingy | Apsaugh. |
| Swift | Wayaughtake. |
| Be quick | Kitto kitto |
| Do that | Amass. |
| Dog | Koosy koosy. |
| Where | Maun. |
| Who | Shoe away. |
| Blue cloth | Lamputeyeat |

| | |
|---|---|
| Red cloth | Lum ap eye at. |
| Road | Istalt. |
| Handsome | Shasughsout. |
| Ugly | Millyuck. |
| Gun | Toocupsam. |
| Powder | Puckpuchee. |
| Balls | Taup. |
| Shirt | Shummaugh. |
| Coat, or Capot | Tsetpeen. |
| Bells | Quillall quillall. |
| Axe | Watsuckst. |
| Beaver | Woospoose. |
| Otter | Nuhsay. |
| Swan | Ou ou. |
| Goose | Ack Ack. |
| Ducks | What What. |
| Elk | Mo luck. |
| Deer | Lama lama. |
| Hat | Thackamalley. |
| Canoe | Wassum. |
| Trousers | Soolattam. |
| Mittens | Skmeigh. |
| Tall | Qualest. |
| Short | Kòkò waw. |
| Fire | E' Locks. |
| Wood | E' Looquass. |
| Stone | Push wah. |
| River | Choosa. |
| Arrived | Auwaentay. |
| To eat | Quat at. |
| Shoes | Iill comse. |
| I think so | Awaupeelsaw. |
| To sleep | Epinyoosmah. |
| Take that | Illwhen'citah. |
| Understand | E' yeuah. |
| Iron | Chachyez. |
| Pipe | Kalamet. |
| Pipe stem | Patsachmas. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Name | Baya. |
| Sick | E' payyoussah. |
| New | Tshimtea. |
| There | Anquinah. |
| To ask | Anatean. |
| Fresh | Thlup thlup. |
| Come here | Wenam. |
| To fill up | Apehitat. |
| Earth | Whililth. |
| Good | Sheaugh. |
| Bad | Kap cheese. |
| Buffalo | Moose moose. |
| To-morrow | Mossecham. |
| Yesterday | Watem. |
| Flesh | Necoot. |
| Bows | Pispes. |
| What | Mesh. |
| Perhaps | Quamesh. |
| Falsehood | E' taiska. |
| Wild | Washeds. |
| Bulky | Totilth. |
| Badger | Sheekey. |
| Barrier | Whamass. |
| It is true | Kodam. |
| To get well | Wakesh. |
| Afraid | Askouss. |
| But | Tickany. |
| And | Ach. |
| They said it | E' notsmah. |
| Thief | Pallwhoesswah. |
| To break | Autleck. |
| Cold | E' youyeam. |
| Shoot | Hananocaugh. |
| Halter | Hoco. |
| Gun worm. | Iscalstouche. |
| Sangle | E' twotican. |
| Saddle | Towlashectcows. |
| Come in | Koom. |

| | |
|---|---|
| To-day | Wetase. |
| Ears | Mitteeyeyou. |
| Mouse | Lacas. |
| More | Wappney. |
| Day | E' whychaneigh. |
| Night | Istsatpa. |
| Dry | Cheau. |
| Snow | Pooeigh. |
| Sun | Aăn. |
| Moon | Illchy. |
| Salmon | Newsaugh. |
| Chief | Meyoughat. |
| Island | Immah. |
| Calm | Epahitanough. |
| Stars | Shaalow. |
| Wind | Holea. |
| Vermillion | Seppens. |
| Provisions | Sepe. |
| Be still | Ausheaugh. |
| Go off | E' yetass. |
| Elsewhere | Houghpeen. |
| Porcupine quills | Shatases. |
| Grass | Sawitah. |
| No more | Tloupau. |
| That | Ke. |
| Near to | Kemptem. |
| Kettle | Kekay. |
| Flint | Appa. |
| Very big | Mackish. |
| Very little | Meelass. |
| When | Sheen. |
| Blanket | Sheeakan. |
| Robe | Outpass. |
| Shot | Kacaaill. |
| Knife | Waltz. |
| Looking Glass | E' penatootoose. |
| To steal | E' puchwissah. |
| To speak | Tamtie. |

| | |
|---|---|
| To trade | Tammeass. |
| Just now | Wochy wochy. |
| By and bye | Kota kota. |
| Hungry | Iax. |
| Bung it | Hometoss. |
| Beads | Calallan. |
| Fat | Teahwhou. |
| To sell | E' twopaw. |
| Mouth | Imm. |
| Maiden | Timmy. |
| To give | Quay pin. |
| Straight | Tequceeck. |
| War-party | Tullykies. |
| Shortly | Tsatpa. |
| These | Callow. |
| Take it away | Illwhitat. |
| To forget | Billeyes. |
| Trap for Beaver | Tooks. |
| To see | E' Toockaunah. |
| Long since | Meema. |
| For ever | Quallisonch. |
| House | Incat. |

A good many of the words in this language, as fresh, balls, brass, consist in a repetition of the word: as in the language of the Sandwich islanders.

The word "Laughs" in this language is not pronounced with a contraction of the lips as the same word is in English, but has an "ach" from the throat; in pronouncing it, therefore, the lips do not move: it is a guttural sound.

Having given a short vocabulary of the principal language spoken by the tribes about Fort Nez Percés, we must next advert to the annoying fact, that the natives of that place differ somewhat from most other Indian tribes. Not contented with one language, they must have a plurality of languages; this, however convenient to them, is certainly embarrassing to the trader, who finds it no easy task to acquire one, and still more difficult to acquire two or three at the same place. The constant intercourse with slaves, the result of war and the roving and unsettled habits of the people, may in some measure account for this anomaly. The youngsters picking up the jargon of the slaves as quickly as their own, completes the *mélange* beyond redemption; so that at the present day, it is scarcely possible to draw a distinct line between their own language and that of strangers. That distinction can only be understood, by a long application, and close intercourse with the natives of the place.

Three Indians, for example, all belonging to the same tribe, perhaps the same family, might arrive at the same establishment, having each exactly the same article to sell, and yet, strange as it may appear, no two of them would probably name that article the same way. One would say "Tammecess taxpool," I wish to trade a beaver. Another, "Towèyou weespoose," I wish to trade a beaver. While the third, differing from both his companions, might say, "E'Towpa E'yechse," I wish to trade a beaver. In addition, therefore, to the foregoing, other words, bearing exactly the same meaning, constantly occur; of which, the following is a brief specimen.

| | |
|---|---|
| Man | Winch. |
| Woman | Tealacky. |
| Boy | Tuchnoot. |
| Girl | Peten. |
| Large | Intae. |
| Neck | Yahat. |
| Deer | Tipee tipee. |
| Pipe | O' Tahalamat. |
| No | Taya. |
| Hungry | Annaweena. |
| Beads | Kopit. |
| To trade | Towé you. |
| Just now | Quillalleigh. |
| By and bye | Quamoonewattah. |
| Hair | Kokoo. |
| Eyes | Atcham. |
| Shot | Mill upwaquill. |
| Knife | Whapallmeh. |
| White | Pillaspeat. |
| Dead | Tepopseyou. |
| Rings | Sapwhillkam. |
| Tobacco | Paypaylam. |
| You | E' men. |
| Iron | Ketsyouyeah. |
| Beaver | E' yeeha. |
| Beaver | Taxpool. |
| Pipe stem | Paeckat. |
| Balls | E' Lupat. |
| Buttons | Sill sill. |
| Horse | Koosy. |
| I myself | Wiseyecame. |
| Bring it | Anneta. |
| Gun | Sackquallallah. |

### Table of the Weather at Fort Nez Percés, Forks of Columbia River, for the year 1822.

| Month and Year. 1822. | Date. | Winds. | Weather. | | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | A.M. | P.M. | |
| Jan. | 1 | S. W. | Clear......... | Clear. | |
| " | 2 | " | " | " | |
| " | 3 | " | Mild ......... | Frosty. | |
| " | 4 | " | Cold ......... | Cold ......... | Strong wind. |
| " | 5 | " | Frosty ...... | Frosty. | |
| " | 6 | " | " | Thawing. | |
| " | 7 | " | Hazy......... | Hazy. | |
| " | 8 | E. | " | Cold. | |
| " | 9 | W. | Clear......... | Foggy. | |
| " | 10 | " | " | Clear......... | Soft weather. |
| " | 11 | S. W. | " | " | |
| " | 12 | " | " | " | |
| " | 13 | N. E. | " | " | |
| " | 14 | " | Snow fall ... | Snow fall ... | 13-in. snow. |
| " | 15 | " | Thaw ...... | Frosty ...... | Snow. |
| " | 16 | " | Clear......... | Clear. | |
| " | 17 | " | " | " | |
| " | 18 | S. W. | " | " | |
| " | 19 | " | " | " | Strong frost. |
| " | 20 | " | " | " | |
| " | 21 | " | " | " | |
| " | 22 | " | " | Cloudy ...... | Snow fall. |
| " | 23 | " | Frosty ...... | Frosty. | |
| " | 24 | " | " | " | Very cold. |
| " | 25 | " | " | " | |
| " | 26 | " | Clear......... | Clear......... | Cold weather. |
| " | 27 | " | " | " | |
| " | 28 | " | " | " | |
| " | 29 | W. | " | " | Frosty. |
| " | 30 | S. W. | Frosty ...... | " | |
| " | 31 | " | " | " | |
| Feb. | 1 | N. E. | Clear......... | Clear......... | Strong wind. |
| " | 2 | " | " | " | |
| " | 3 | W. | Cloudy ...... | Cloudy. | Snow fall. |
| " | 4 | N. E. | Clear......... | " | |

| Month and Year. 1822. | Date. | Winds. | Weather. | | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | A.M. | P.M. | |
| Feb. | 5 | N. W. | Clear. | Cloudy. | |
| „ | 6 | „ | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 7 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 8 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 9 | S. W. | „ | Cloudy. | |
| „ | 10 | „ | Cloudy ...... | Clear. | |
| „ | 11 | N. W. | „ | „ | Gale of wind. |
| „ | 12 | „ | Clear......... | „ | |
| „ | 13 | „ | „ | Cloudy. | |
| „ | 14 | W. | Frosty ...... | Frosty. | |
| „ | 15 | „ | Clear......... | Cold. | |
| „ | 16 | „ | Cloudy ...... | „ | |
| „ | 17 | „ | „ | Windy. | |
| „ | 18 | N. E. | Dull .......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 19 | „ | Clear......... | „ | |
| „ | 20 | „ | Cloudy ...... | „ | |
| „ | 21 | „ | „ | Cloudy. | |
| „ | 22 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 23 | W. | Windy ...... | Clear. | |
| „ | 24 | „ | Cloudy ...... | „ | Heavy snow fall. |
| „ | 25 | „ | „ | Cloudy. | |
| „ | 26 | S. W. | Clear......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 27 | „ | „ | Soft. | |
| „ | 28 | W. | Warm ...... | Warm ...... | Snow thaws. |
| Mar. | 1 | S. | Clear......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 2 | „ | Cloudy ...... | Snow fall..... | Fall of 4 in. |
| „ | 3 | S. W. | Clear......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 4 | N. W. | Cloudy ...... | Cloudy ...... | Snow melts. |
| „ | 5 | „ | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 6 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 7 | N. | „ | Rainy. | |
| „ | 8 | „ | Clear......... | Little rain.. | Weather changeable. |
| „ | 9 | „ | Cloudy ...... | Clear. | |
| „ | 10 | W. | Clear......... | Cloudy. | |
| „ | 11 | S. W. | Rainy ...... | Rainy. | |
| „ | 12 | N. W. | Clear......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 13 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 14 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 15 | S. W. | Cloudy ...... | Rainy ...... | Warm. |
| „ | 16 | „ | „ | Cloudy. | |
| „ | 17 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 18 | W. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 19 | „ | Clear......... | Fair weather. | |
| „ | 20 | S. W. | „ | Clear......... | Pleasant. |

| Month and Year. 1882. | Date. | Winds. | Weather. |  | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  | A.M. | P.M. |  |
| Mar. | 21 | S. W. | Clear.......... | Clear. |  |
| " | 22 | W. | " | " |  |
| " | 23 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 24 | " | Cloudy ...... | " |  |
| " | 25 | S. W. | " | Rainy. |  |
| " | 26 | " | Clear.......... | Cloudy ...... | Snow melt. |
| " | 27 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 28 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 29 | " | Cloudy ...... | " |  |
| " | 30 | W. | " | " |  |
| " | 31 | N. W. | Dry .......... | Clear.......... | Warm. |
| Apr. | 1 | N. | Clear.......... | Clear. |  |
| " | 2 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 3 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 4 | S. W. | Cloudy ...... | " |  |
| " | 5 | " | Clear.......... | " |  |
| " | 6 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 7 | E. | " | Cloudy ...... | Changeable. |
| " | 8 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 9 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 10 | S. W. | Cloudy ...... | Clear. |  |
| " | 11 | " | Clear.......... | " |  |
| " | 12 | W. | " | " |  |
| " | 13 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 14 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 15 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 16 | " | " | " | Snow all disappeared. |
| " | 17 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 18 | S. W. | Clear.......... | " |  |
| " | 19 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 20 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 21 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 22 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 23 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 24 | " | Cloudy ...... | " |  |
| " | 25 | " | Clear.... .... | Cloudy ...... | Changeable. |
| " | 26 | " | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 27 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 28 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 29 | W. | Warm ...... | Warm. |  |
| " | 30 | S. W. | Clear.......... | Clear.......... | Very warm. |
| May | 1 | W. | Clear.......... | Clear. |  |
| " | 2 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 3 | " | " | " |  |

| Month and Year. 1822. | Date. | Winds. | Weather. |  | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  | A.M. | P.M. |  |
| May | 4 | W. | Clear......... | Clear. |  |
| " | 5 | " | " | Cloudy ...... | Sultry. |
| " | 6 | S. W. | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 7 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 8 | " | Cloudy ...... | " |  |
| " | 9 | " | Clear......... | Cloudy. |  |
| " | 10 | " | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 11 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 12 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 13 | N. E. | " | " |  |
| " | 14 | S. W. | " | " |  |
| " | 15 | " | " | Cloudy. |  |
| " | 16 | N. E. | Cloudy ...... | Clear. |  |
| " | 17 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 18 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 19 | " | Clear......... | " |  |
| " | 20 | S. | " | " |  |
| " | 21 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 22 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 23 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 24 | " | " | " | Thunder. |
| " | 25 | S. W. | " | " |  |
| " | 26 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 27 | " | Rainy ...... | Cloudy. |  |
| " | 28 | " | Clear......... | " |  |
| " | 29 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 30 | " | " | " | Strong wind. |
| " | 31 | " | " | Calm. |  |
| June | 1 | W. | Sultry ...... | Calm. |  |
| " | 2 | " | " | " | Thunder and lightning. |
| " | 3 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 4 | " | Clear......... | Clear. |  |
| " | 5 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 6 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 7 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 8 | N. E. | " | " |  |
| " | 9 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 10 | S. | " | " |  |
| " | 11 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 12 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 13 | S. W. | Windy ...... | Sultry. |  |
| " | 14 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 15 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 16 | " | " | " |  |

| Month and Year. 1822. | Date. | Winds. | Weather. | | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | A.M. | P.M. | |
| June | 17 | S. W. | Windy ...... | Cloudy ...... | Strong wind. |
| „ | 18 | „ | „ | Sultry. | |
| „ | 19 | „ | Clear......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 20 | „ | Sultry ...... | Calm. | |
| „ | 21 | „ | Cloudy ...... | Rain ......... | Changeable. |
| „ | 22 | „ | Fair ......... | Sultry. | |
| „ | 23 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 24 | „ | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 25 | „ | Clear......... | „ | |
| „ | 26 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 27 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 28 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 29 | „ | „ | „ | Heavy |
| „ | 30 | W. | „ | „ | Thunder. |
| July | 1 | S. | Clear......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 2 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 3 | „ | „ | „ | Hazy. |
| „ | 4 | S. W. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 5 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 6 | „ | „ | „ | Dull. |
| „ | 7 | „ | „ | Cloudy ...... | Sultry. |
| „ | 8 | „ | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 9 | „ | Cloudy ...... | „ | |
| „ | 10 | „ | Clear......... | „ | Strong wind. |
| „ | 11 | „ | „ | Windy. | |
| „ | 12 | „ | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 13 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 14 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 15 | „ | „ | „ | Thunder. |
| „ | 16 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 17 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 18 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 19 | „ | Sultry ...... | „ | |
| „ | 20 | „ | „ | Very warm. | Hazy. |
| „ | 21 | „ | „ | „ | Thunder and lightning. |
| „ | 22 | „ | „ | Dull ......... | |
| „ | 23 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 24 | W. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 25 | „ | „ | Cloudy ...... | Greatest heat. |
| „ | 26 | „ | „ | Sultry. | |
| „ | 27 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 28 | N. W. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 29 | „ | Cloudy ...... | Drops rain. | Calm. |
| „ | 30 | „ | Clear......... | Clear. | |

| Month and Year. 1822. | Date. | Winds. | Weather. | | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | A.M. | P.M. | |
| July | 31 | N. W. | Clear......... | Clear. | |
| Aug. | 1 | W. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 2 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 3 | „ | „ | „ | Thunder. |
| „ | 4 | N. W. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 5 | „ | Cloudy ...... | „ | |
| „ | 6 | „ | Sultry ...... | „ | |
| „ | 7 | „ | „ | Very warm. | |
| „ | 8 | S. | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 9 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 10 | „ | „ | Cloudy. | |
| „ | 11 | „ | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 12 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 13 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 14 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 15 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 16 | „ | Rainy ...... | „ | |
| „ | 17 | „ | Clear......... | „ | |
| „ | 18 | S. W. | „ | „ | Hazy weather. |
| „ | 19 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 20 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 21 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 22 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 23 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 24 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 25 | „ | „ | Cloudy ...... | Lightning. |
| „ | 26 | „ | „ | Hazy. | |
| „ | 27 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 28 | S. | Clear......... | Calm. | |
| „ | 29 | „ | „ | Rain. | |
| „ | 30 | W. | „ | Clear......... | Changeable. |
| „ | 31 | „ | „ | „ | High wind. |
| Sept. | 1 | S. W. | Cloudy ...... | Clear. | |
| „ | 2 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 3 | „ | Cloudy ...... | „ | Thunder. |
| „ | 4 | „ | Clear......... | „ | |
| „ | 5 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 6 | S. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 7 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 8 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 9 | „ | „ | Cloudy ...... | Thunder and lightning. |
| „ | 10 | W. | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 11 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 12 | „ | „ | „ | |

| Month and Year. 1882. | Date. | Winds. | Weather. | | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | A.M. | P.M. | |
| Sept. | 13 | W. | Clear.......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 14 | „ | Cloudy ...... | Calm. | |
| „ | 15 | N. W. | Clear.......... | „ | |
| „ | 16 | „ | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 17 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 18 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 19 | S. E. | „ | „ | Strong wind. |
| „ | 20 | „ | „ | Rainy. | |
| „ | 21 | „ | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 22 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 23 | „ | Rainy ...... | „ | |
| „ | 24 | S. | Cloudy ...... | Cloudy ...... | Heavy thunder. |
| „ | 25 | „ | Cloudy ...... | Clear. | |
| „ | 26 | „ | Clear.......... | „ | |
| „ | 27 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 28 | N. E. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 29 | „ | Cloudy ...... | Rainy. | |
| „ | 30 | „ | Clear.......... | Dull .......... | Drops of rain. |
| Oct. | 1 | W. | Gloomy...... | Rainy. | |
| „ | 2 | „ | Clear.......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 3 | „ | „ | Rainy ..... | Changeable. |
| „ | 4 | „ | „ | Clear. | |
| „ | 5 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 6 | „ | Cloudy ...... | „ | |
| „ | 7 | „ | Clear.......... | „ | |
| „ | 8 | E. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 9 | „ | Cloudy ...... | Hazy.......... | Raw weather. |
| „ | 10 | W. | Rainy ...... | Rainy. | |
| „ | 11 | „ | Clear.......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 12 | „ | Very fine ... | Very fine. | |
| „ | 13 | S. E. | Clear.......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 14 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 15 | N. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 16 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 17 | S. W. | Cold .......... | „ | |
| „ | 18 | „ | Clear.......... | „ | |
| „ | 19 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 20 | N. W. | Cloudy ...... | Cloudy ...... | Strong wind. |
| „ | 21 | „ | Rainy ...... | Rainy. | |
| „ | 22 | S. | Clear.......... | Clear. | |
| „ | 23 | N. W. | „ | „ | |
| „ | 24 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 25 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 26 | „ | „ | „ | |
| „ | 27 | W. | „ | Cold. | Cold weather. |

| Month and Year. 1822. | Date. | Winds. | Weather. |  | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  | A.M. | P.M. |  |
| Oct. | 28 | W. | Clear.......... | Cold. |  |
| " | 29 | " | Dull .......... | Dull. |  |
| " | 30 | " | Rainy ...... | Rainy. |  |
| " | 31 | " | Clear.......... | Clear.......... | Pleasant. |
| Nov. | 1 | N. W. | Cloudy ...... | Cloudy. |  |
| " | 2 | W. | " | " |  |
| " | 3 | " | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 4 | " | Fair .......... | " |  |
| " | 5 | E. | " | " | Heavy mist. |
| " | 6 | " | Clear.......... | " |  |
| " | 7 | S. E. | " | Rainy. |  |
| " | 8 | N. | " | " |  |
| " | 9 | S. | " | " | Changeable. |
| " | 10 | N. W. | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 11 | S. E. | Cold .......... | Frosty. |  |
| " | 12 | W. | " | " |  |
| " | 13 | S. E. | " | Dull. |  |
| " | 14 | S. W. | Rainy ...... | Rainy. |  |
| " | 15 | " | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 16 | " | Clear....... . | Cold. |  |
| " | 17 | " | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 18 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 19 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 20 | N. W. | " | Snow fall ... | 4-in. snow. |
| " | 21 | " | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 22 | " | " | Cold. |  |
| " | 23 | S. E. | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 24 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 25 | " | Rainy ...... | Rainy. |  |
| " | 26 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 27 | E. | Clear......... | Clear......... | Pleasant. |
| " | 28 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 29 | N. W. | Rainy......... | Rainy. |  |
| " | 30 | " | Clear......... | Clear......... | Cold clear weather. |
| Dec. | 1 | N. W. | Clear......... | Cold ......... | Gloomy weather. |
| " | 2 | S. W. | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 3 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 4 | N. | " | " |  |
| " | 5 | N. W. | Rainy ...... | Little rain. |  |
| " | 6 | " | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 7 | " | Clear......... | " |  |
| " | 8 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 9 | W. | " | " |  |

| Month and Year. 1882. | Date. | Winds. | Weather. |  | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  | A.M. | P.M. |  |
| Dec. | 10 | N. W. | Rainy ...... | Clear. |  |
| " | 11 | S. | Clear......... | Dull ......... | Cloudy weather. |
| " | 12 | N. W. | " | " |  |
| " | 13 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 14 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 15 | " | Cloudy ...... | Rain. |  |
| " | 16 | W. | " | Clear. |  |
| " | 17 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 18 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 19 | N. W. | Clear......... | " |  |
| " | 20 | S. E. | Snow ......... | Snow......... | 12-in. snowfall. |
| " | 21 | " | Clear......... | Clear. |  |
| " | 22 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 23 | E. | " | " |  |
| " | 24 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 25 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 26 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 27 | S. W. | Rainy ...... | " |  |
| " | 28 | " | Clear......... | " |  |
| " | 29 | " | " | " |  |
| " | 30 | W. | Frosty ...... | Cold ......... | Clear and cold. |
| " | 31 | " | " | Frosty. |  |

## DIRECTION OF THE WINDS.

| 1822. | W. | N.W. | E. | S.E. | N. | N.E. | S. | S.W. | Days, Wet. | Days, Dry. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| January ...... | 3 | ... | 1 | ... | ... | 5 | ... | 22 | ... | 31 |
| February ... | 9 | 7 | ... | ... | ... | 8 | ... | 4 | 3 | 25 |
| March ...... | 7 | 7 | ... | 1 | 3 | ... | 2 | 11 | 5 | 26 |
| April ......... | 7 | ... | 3 | ... | 3 | ... | ... | 17 | 0 | 30 |
| May ......... | 5 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 | 5 | 16 | 1 | 30 |
| June ......... | 9 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 | 3 | 16 | 1 | 29 |
| July ......... | 4 | 4 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 | 20 | 1 | 30 |
| August ...... | 5 | 4 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 12 | 10 | 2 | 29 |
| September... | 5 | 4 | ... | 5 | ... | 3 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 27 |
| October ...... | 15 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | ... | 1 | 3 | 3 | 28 |
| November ... | 4 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 1 | ... | 1 | 5 | 10 | 20 |
| December ... | 6 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 1 | ... | 1 | 5 | 7 | 24 |
|  | 79 | 50 | 15 | 18 | 10 | 23 | 36 | 134 | 36 | 329 |

Greatest degree of heat in the shade during 1822, 110°, Fahr. thermometer.

Greatest degree of cold during 1822, 10° below zero, Fahr. thermometer.

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

In One Volume, price 5*s.*

# ADVENTURES OF THE FIRST SETTLERS ON THE OREGON OR COLUMBIA RIVER.

BEING A NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION FITTED OUT BY JOHN JACOB ASTOR, TO ESTABLISH "THE PACIFIC FUR COMPANY."

With an Account of some Indian Tribes on the Coast of the Pacific.

BY ALEXANDER ROSS,

ONE OF THE ADVENTURERS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

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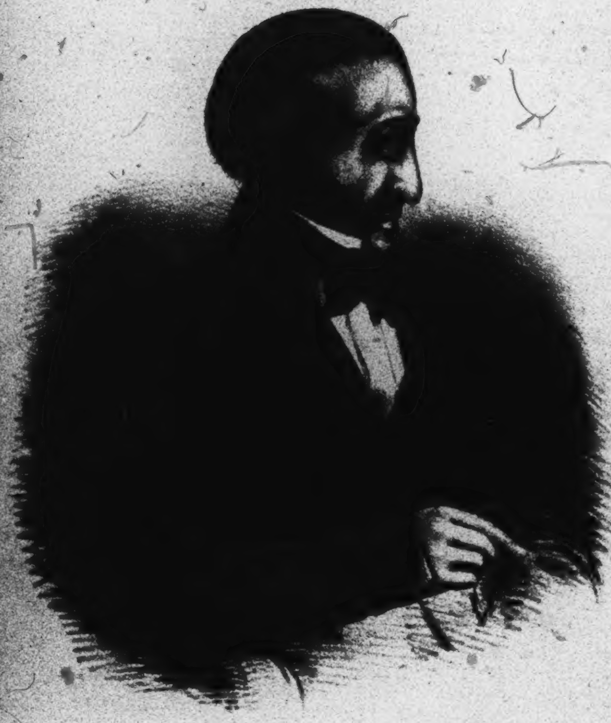

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Alexander Ross

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# THE FUR HUNTERS
# OF THE FAR WEST;

A NARRATIVE OF
## ADVENTURES IN THE OREGON AND ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

BY ALEXANDER ROSS,
AUTHOR OF "ADVENTURES OF THE FIRST SETTLERS ON THE OREGON OR COLUMBIA RIVER."

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# FUR HUNTERS OF THE FAR WEST.

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HAVING given an account of the fur trade in the "Far West," and of the people employed in it, in our first volume, we proceed in this to relate our personal adventures in the Snake country.

In the spring of the year 1823 I drew up a statement on the subject of the trade in the Snake country, which, after submitting to the gentlemen superintending the Company's affairs on the Columbia, I forwarded to the Governor and Council at York Factory. In the meantime, however, as several of the trappers and hunters had, on Mr. M'Kenzie's retiring, been left without much employment, a party was fitted out for the Snake country, and placed under the direction of a Mr. Finan M'Donald, a veteran of the north-west school, now in the Hudson's Bay Company's service.

Soon after M'Donald's departure, however, John Warren Dease, Esq., a chief trader of the new Company, arrived from Rupert's Land, informing me that I had been named to succeed Mr. M'Kenzie in the charge of the Snake country, and that he had come to relieve me, and take charge of Fort Nez Percés. I observed that the charge of the Snake country was more befitting a chief factor than a clerk, and would suit him better than me; and that, besides, I had made up my mind to leave the country. This avowal took my friend by surprise, as my departure might have placed him in the Snake country—a quarter much dreaded by all north-westers.

My arrangements, however, for the two years having expired, and being prepared for leaving the country, I left Fort Nez Percés in charge of Mr. Dease, and set out with my family for the Rocky Mountains; but on my arrival there, I met Governor Simpson's letter, in reply to the statement I had transmitted in the spring. This letter was dated "York Factory, 13th July, 1823," and therein the Governor observed, "We have given the subject of your communication, in reference to the Snake country, mature consideration, and have resolved to fit out an expedition to that quarter, whereof we tender you the management for three years." This proposal was accompanied by the offer of a liberal salary; but, having set out with a view of leaving the service, I hesitated to accept the proposal. My inclinations prompted me to continue my journey, and yet a desire to meet the Governor's views inclined me strongly to close with the offer; the latter opinion was supported by my friend P. S. Ogden, Esq., who, being on the spot, did everything in his power to persuade me to accept the appointment.

Never did my mind undergo such a conflict as on this occasion; and two days were passed in anxious suspense before I could determine. Ultimately, however, I resolved to go back, on being promised eighty men; but for one year only. Embarking, therefore, with my family, we took the current for Fort Nez Percés; but on arriving at the Kettle Falls, I was astonished to learn that, on M'Donald's return from his Snake trip, he and his men, instead of being, as expected, at Fort Nez Percés, were all at Spokane House! Thither, I had consequently to shape my course; and I reached that place at the close of October. But had I known that I should have been required to start from Spokane, instead of Fort Nez Percés, no consideration would have made me return; for this disarranged all my plans, and was a departure from the Company's views, which threw the Snake trade back again into the old channel.

No step could have operated more to the detriment of our Snake affairs than the falling back again upon Spokane as a depôt for carrying on the trade of that quarter; and if the reader refers to the fourth chapter, he will very naturally ask the question,—why did M'Donald, instead of going to Fort Nez Percés, return to that place? We have already noticed that he was a veteran of the northwest school; that he had passed many years among the fascinating pleasures of the far-famed Spokane House; and the moment that M'Kenzie had turned his back on the Columbia, old prejudices were revived.

Before leaving this part of our subject, we might make a remark or two on M'Donald's late trip to the Snakes. Everything considered, the trip was as successful as could have been expected in furs; for M'Donald was a zealous and faithful servant; but in other respects it was rather an unfortunate trip. In a conference with a war-party of the Piegans, one of his men, named Anderson, was treacherously shot. In a pitched battle which took place between his party and the Blackfeet, he lost seven more of his men; and in a squabble with the Iroquois of his own party, he was badly wounded from an accidental discharge of a gun.

At Spokane House I remained but a few days. Instead, however, of my complement of eighty men, I could only muster forty; and of that small number many of them were objectionable. With these, however, I left on the 12th of November, and proceeded up Flathead River to the post of that name, situated at the foot of the mountains. There I remained for some time, and picked up fourteen more, making my party, including myself, in all fifty-five persons; each of whom had to be fitted out, according to his capacity as a hunter, with a gun, from two to four horses, and from six to ten steel traps, besides clothing and ammunition; and generally all on credit. With this number I made preparations for setting out on my expedition.

On assembling my people, I smiled at the medley, the variety of accents, of dresses, habits, and ideas; but, above all, at the confusion of languages in our camp: there were two Americans, seventeen Canadians, five half-breeds from the east side of the mountains, twelve Iroquois, two Abinakee Indians from Lower Canada, two natives from Lake Nipisingue, one Soulteaux from Lake Huron, two Crees from Athabasca, one Chinook, two Spokanes, two Kouttanais, three Flat-heads, two Callispellums, one Palooche, and one Snake slave! Five of the Canadians were above sixty years of age, and two were on the wrong side of seventy. The Iroquois were good hunters, but plotting and faithless. From five to ten of the more trusty and resolute would always be required as a guard on the camp and horses, and could therefore be but seldom employed in trapping beaver; and as for the nineteen natives, they were only of use as far as numbers went, or in taking care of our horses: in these respects, however, they proved very serviceable. So that upon the whole, I could scarcely count on more than twenty trappers at any time.

One-half, perhaps two-thirds, of the people I had under my command were more expert at the bow and arrow than at the use of the beaver trap; more accustomed to indolence and free-will than to subordination.

In summing up, however, we must not forget that twenty-five of the party were married, and several of the youngsters carried guns; so that in our camp there were, exclusive of the men, twenty-five women and sixty-four children. The rest of the equipment consisted of seventy-five guns, a brass three-pounder, 212 beaver-traps, and 392 horses, together with a good stock of powder and ball, and some trading articles. I now observed to my men, that the journey would be long, and not at all times, perhaps, exempt from danger; but that we might, with industry and perseverance, anticipate a successful trip. Yet, if there were any among the party who preferred remaining at home to going on the journey, the choice was now offered them: this I stated as a bar to grumbling on the journey; but the whole, with one voice, exclaimed, "We prefer going." This point being settled, I next warned them that our safety and success would very much depend upon our unanimity and care; and that all would be little enough to guard against surprise and preserve our horses, on which the success of the undertaking depended. Hence, I said, a night-watch would be established and enforced rigidly, during the journey, upon every one in turn. This also met their approbation.

In the days of the north-west, the council of Fort William did everything that could be done to render the trapping system in the Snake country, during M'Kenzie's time, as efficient as possible; but their instructions had to travel 3,000 miles, and to pass through the hands of many subordinates, each of whom, according to the nature of things in this country, had a voice, which influenced the final arrangement, and not unfrequently stripped it of its usefulness! And the same remarks apply in reference to the Hudson's Bay Company, for the council of York Factory is as far removed from the scene of action as the council of Fort William was. M'Kenzie had to combat these evils; so had his successors: but all to little purpose; for the system, instead of improving by experience, is getting worse every day.

The party being now ready, we left the Flatheads, and proceeded on our journey. By starting in the depth of winter, less difficulty was experienced in providing for so many people. Our camp, with all its defects, appeared at a little distance somewhat formidable; as the whole cavalcade, when in marching order, extended a line of a mile or more in length. Having made about eight miles, and killing only one deer—for we had to depend upon our guns for our suppers,—that small animal proved but a slender repast for 137 hungry mouths. We encamped at a place called Prairie de Chevaux, and next day at Prairie de Carnass; here our hunters had a little better luck, killing six deer, so we had a better supper: and we required it, for we had passed two days on only one light meal.

The day following we passed the crossing-place, where I picked up several pieces of the best iron ore I had seen in the country; at a short distance from that are the Forks. Here we left the main branch of the Flat-head River, where it makes a quick bend to N.W., to the lake of that name. Then following up what is called Jacques Fork, we encamped at Rivière aux Marons, or Wild Horse River. Our travelling went on but slowly, owing to the scarcity of provisions; for we had nothing with us. In the course of this day's travel, we made a halt, and smoked our pipes at a spot on which some faint traces of civilisation were to be seen. A Mr. Howes, an enterprising individual belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, established himself here in 1810; but after passing part of the winter, he crossed the mountains again, and never returned. I believe this is the first and only instance in which any of the servants of that Company had penetrated so far to the west, prior to the country falling into their own hands in 1821.

Soon after encamping, the Iroquois began to sing hymns: as soon as I heard that, I doubled the watch, and gave strict orders to observe their motions, as the singing of sacred music by these hypocritical wretches is a sure sign of disaffection. As I expected, early next morning, I found the Iroquois in a body, with old Pierre and John Grey at their head, standing at my tent-door. Knowing their character, this did not surprise me. I was, however, anxious to know the cause, and addressed myself, as a matter of course, to the head man. "What now, Pierre?" I asked. "Oh, nothing," replied he; "the Iroquois merely wish to see their accounts." This being a reasonable demand, although somewhat out of place, I of course complied with it; although I well knew that such a request was but the introduction to some other more unreasonable demand, for they had all of them seen their accounts before starting: but this is the way they generally introduce all subjects. After explaining their accounts, I asked them their motives, as this was neither the time nor the place to be inquiring about accounts, nor discussing arrangements. After several remarks, Pierre observed, "Our debts are heavy, and we are never able to reduce them in a large party; allow us to go off by ourselves, and we shall do much better." I reminded them of their conduct when left by M'Kenzie at the river Skamnaugh, and of course resisted their intention; pointing out to them the consequences; stating that the party was already too small, and that a further division would put an end to the expedition altogether. "Why," continued I, "did you not express your wishes before starting, when I offered you either to come or to remain? It is now no longer time, and I hope such a request will not be made again. The Company place great confidence in your exertions, and I shall do everything in my power to make your undertaking comfortable and profitable." With these assurances they seemed satisfied, and we proceeded.

The Iroquois, however, lagged behind, and, arriving some time after we had put up, encamped on one side. This being an unusual step, I suspected all was not right, and that they were still bent on playing us a trick. I, therefore, sent for Pierre, and explained matters fully to him; when I learned for the first time from Pierre that Grey was a plotting busy-body. Confidence was after a time restored, and the Iroquois reconciled once more. In consequence of deep snows and bad weather, we remained for several days in the same encampment. Here I assembled the people, and made some new regulations.

I observed to them that there appeared to be a great and unnecessary waste of ammunition in the camp; that hitherto, while the party were travelling, half of the people—the ignorant as well as the experienced hunters—were occupied in pursuit of game, by which the animals were more frequently frightened than killed, the duties of the journey and camp both neglected, and provisions were scarce: a change of system was, therefore, necessary. To this end it was settled—that four hunters, in turn, should precede the camp daily, and all the rest attend to other duties; and it was anticipated that we should be always better supplied with provisions, other duties would be better attended to, and not a third of the ammunition spent.

In observing the effect produced by guns of different calibres, it was found that the rifles of small bore, taking from 60 to 70 balls to the pound, very frequently did not kill, although they might hit; while rifles taking from 30 to 40 to the pound seldom missed killing on the spot. The former out of twenty shots seldom kills more than seven or eight animals; whereas of the latter, if twenty shots are fired, fifteen are generally deadly. It was, therefore, settled that the rifles of larger calibre should be used in all places where animals proved scarce.

Our party consisted of four classes of people, differing in almost everything but the human form—Canadians, half-breeds, Iroquois, and natives of different nations. It was agreed, with the consent of all, that I should appoint the person of most influence in each party as a head over the rest. This arrangement would relieve me of much trouble, and promised to work well. In all difficult cases I was to call these headmen together, to hold a council, so that things might go on smoothly.

From Rivière au Marons we raised camp, and proceeded on our journey up what is called the valley of Raucin au Mer, or Spetlum country, along the base of the mountains, until we reached a defile of the dividing ridge, called Hell's Gates, a distance from Flathead Fort of about 70 miles, general course, S.E. This place is rendered notorious as being the great war-road by which the Piegans and

Blackfeet often visit this side of the mountains; by the same pass the Flatheads and other tribes cross over to the Missouri side in quest of buffalo. The spot has, therefore, been the scene of many a bloody contest between these hostile nations.

This being the usual and only place known to the whites for passing the mountains, I hesitated for some time between two opinions—whether to cross there, or proceed in hopes of crossing somewhere else to more advantage. Difficulties presented themselves in either case: by adopting the former, we should have been exposed to the Blackfeet and other tribes during a journey of three weeks, the time we should have taken before we could reach a pass, either to get clear of those tribes, or back into the Snake country; by the latter, the road was entirely unknown to the whites, and the mountains were lofty and abrupt. Yet we decided on the latter, and determined to continue our course.

Here again the Iroquois wished to go off, saying that they would make good hunts in the recesses of these Alpine ridges; but I knew them too well to be duped by their artifices. They would have either sneaked back or lurked about among the Flatheads, and gone with them; not to hunt the beaver, nor pay their debts, for that never troubled them, but to feast on buffalo. I, therefore, got them brought round again, thinking that, if I once succeeded in getting them into the heart of the

Snake country, all would be right, and they would not be so anxious to go off by themselves.

In this encampment we remained for a day or two, and our hunters killed four wild horses. Just at the time we were starting one morning, and in the act of crossing a deep ravine not far from our camp, about twenty of those beautiful and hardy tenants of the mountain came dashing down from a neighbouring height, with their shaggy manes and long tails waving in the wind; but, with all their keen scent, the rifles of our hunters brought four of them to the ground before they had time to turn round! It is a rare thing for them to be either entrapped or approached, and our hunters were more delighted with their success in this little adventure than if they had killed a hundred buffalo. We also got twenty-seven elks and thirty-two small deer at this place, which secured the party for a while from hunger.

On leaving our encampment at Hell's Gates, I discovered that one of my Iroquois, named Jacob, had deserted. To have gone in pursuit of him would have been vain, if he wished to keep out of our way; so we continued our journey. We had not proceeded far, when the advanced party called out, "Enemies! enemies! Blackfeet!" As soon as the word "enemy" is uttered, every one looks at the priming of his gun, and primes anew; which on the present occasion was no sooner done than a party mounted on horseback advanced at full speed.

We were soon prepared to receive them, either as friends or foes. On our getting up to them, we found eight Piegans squatted down at the corner of a thicket, with their snow-shoes and other travelling necessaries at their side.

On our approach, they manifested a good deal of uneasiness: not one of them got up to shake hands with us—a custom peculiar to most Indians; but they sat still, each having his bow and arrows lying between his legs ready for action. As soon as we spoke to them, however, their fear vanished, and they became cheerful. In answer to our queries, they said, "We have come from the Missouri. There are no other Piegans in this quarter. We have been a month on our journey in search of the whites to trade." But, seeing scarcely anything with them, I asked them what they had to trade; which rather puzzled them, for they kept looking at each other for some time without giving an answer. I took them to our camp, gave them a smoke, and then warned them not to follow us, nor attempt to steal our horses; for, if they did, I would shoot them.

Trade, however, was not their object—they were scouts on the look out, from some large camp. On putting up at night, I was informed that several of the Iroquois had followed the Piegans, and traded away all their ammunition for a few useless Indian toys; one of which was a head-dress of feathers! On inquiring into the particulars, and finding the report to be true, I spoke to Pierre, the head man, and reproved them for their conduct. Elk and small deer now became abundant; so that our hunters had no difficulty in keeping the pangs of hunger at a distance. Our traps brought us twelve beaver; being our first successful attempt since we started.

The second day after passing the Piegans two of the Iroquois, named Laurent and Lizard, deserted the party, and turned back. It was some hours before I had notice of the circumstance. Now that they had begun, there will be no end to desertion thought I, if a stop is not speedily put to it: because Jacob got off clear, others will think to do so. Losing no time, I took four men with me, and hurried after the fugitives. It was a leap in the dark; for they might have hid themselves so well in a few minutes' time that we could never have found them out; but we came upon the fellows as they were making a fire at the distance of sixteen miles off, and so surprised were they that they took no steps to get out of the way. We at once laid hold of them, but could not by fair means prevail upon them to return; we, therefore, had recourse to threats, being determined, since they gave us so hard a ride, not to deal too softly with them. Lizard, in particular, would neither lead nor drive, and we threatened to drag him back at one of the horse-tails before he consented to go. Back, however, we brought them; but, having to sleep on the way, we had to keep watch over the rascals all night. On the next day we got back to the party early, raised camp, and proceeded; but we had not gone far before the cry of "Enemies! enemies!" was again raised. A party immediately pushed on a-head, when the supposed enemies turned out to be friends; they were six Nez Percés, whom we had supposed to be horse-thieves, as none of them had saddles, and yet they were driving horses before them.

Although we had no danger to apprehend from these people, yet their presence annoyed us, for it still kept a door open for some of our party to desert; so we got clear of them as soon as possible, and hastened on our journey. Before parting, however, Vallade, one of the Spokane Indians belonging to our party, wished to accompany them. Vallade was a good fellow in his way; but, not being accustomed to long journeys, he grew fainthearted; so I gave him his discharge, and he turned back.

As we left the Indians, however, four of the Iroquois kept in the rear, and exchanged with the Nez Percés two of their guns for horses! If they had not guns to defend themselves, they had a relay of horses to carry them out of danger. Such improvident and thoughtless beings as Iroquois should always be restricted to their hunting-implements; all the rest goes in traffic among the natives, to no purpose.

During some days past the weather had been very severe; so that many of the old as well as young were severely frostbitten in their fingers, noses, cheeks, and feet. At every encampment more or less beaver were caught daily. Elk, deer, and mountain goats became very numerous; so that our new regulations made us fare well in the way of provisions. Had it been our lot to pass here in summer instead of in winter, there are many level spots and fertile valleys that, from the appearance of the country, might invite the husbandman and the plough.

After putting up one evening, the uncommon noise made by the wolves about our camp annoyed us. At last, it struck me that it might be wolves on two legs, imitating the animal; and as the place was very suspicious I doubled the night-watch, and we laid down in our clothes, but passed a restless night. In the morning, however, all was safe, and we were early on our journey. In no place of our trip, Hell's Gates itself scarcely excepted, did we meet with such a gloomy and suspicious place. At every bend of the river, wild and romantic scenes opened to view; the river alone preventing the hills and cliffs from embracing each other. We had to cross and recross twelve times in half as many miles, until we reached a rocky and slippery path on its margin, where grew a few pine-trees, through which the narrow and intricate path led.

Out of one of the pines I have just mentioned, and about five feet from the ground, is growing up with the tree a ram's head, with the horns still attached to it; and so fixed and imbedded is it in the tree, that it must have grown up with it: almost the whole of one of the horns, and more than half of the head, is buried in the tree; but most of the other horn, and part of the head, protrudes out at least a foot. We examined both, and found the tree scarcely two feet in diameter. Here we put up at an early hour, and called the place Ram's Horn Encampment.

Our Flathead Indians related to us a rather strange story about the ram's head. Indian legend relates that one of the first Flathead Indians who passed this way attacked a mountain ram as large and stout as a common horse; that on being wounded, the fierce animal turned round upon his pursuer, who taking shelter behind the tree, the ram came against it with all his force, so that he drove his head through it; but before he could get it extracted again, the Indian killed him, and took off the body, leaving the head as a memento of the adventure. All Indians reverence the celebrated tree, which they say, by the circumstances related, conferred on them the power of mastering and killing all animals; hundreds, therefore, in passing this way sacrifice something as a tribute to the ram's head; and one of the Iroquois, not to incur the displeasure of the god of hunters, hung a bit of tobacco on the horn, to make his hunting propitious.

Late in the evening, when our hunters, who had been in advance of the camp, arrived, they had a sad story to tell. "We have been," said they, "at the head of the river; our travelling in this direction is at an end: the mountains a-head surround us in all directions, and are impassable; the snows everywhere beyond the banks of the river are from eight to ten feet deep, and that without a single opening or pass to get through; so that we may as well turn back without going further, for we shall have to go by Hell's Gates at last." Discouraging as these accounts were, we made preparations to advance; for I was determined not to turn back, while I could advance. Leaving, therefore, Ram's Horn Encampment, we proceeded in various directions, often making several traverses through ice and snow; we then left the river, and crossed what we called the Little Mountain; the ascending and descending of which occupied us many hours in putting two miles behind us. Regaining the river, we continued our journey until we reached a little fork, where two small streams crossed each other at right angles, in the middle of a deep valley, hemmed in by lofty mountains; the appearance of which seemed strongly to confirm the opinion of the hunters, that we could proceed no further in the present course. Here we made a pause, and all gazed in wonder at the bold and stupendous front before us, which in every direction seemed to bid defiance to our approach. This gloomy and discouraging spot we reached on the 12th of March, 1824, and named the place "The Valley of Troubles."

*March* 13*th*.—Our situation and the hopeless prospect before us made me pass a sleepless night; but on going through the camp this morning, I found many, and the Iroquois in particular, with a smile of gratification on their countenances, at the idea of their having to turn back: the very idea of such anticipations on their part aggravated the evil on mine. After putting the camp in a position of defence—for we had now to consider ourselves in an enemy's country—I took six men with me and proceeded in the direction our road lay, in order to reconnoitre the passes in the mountains. We set out on horseback, and finding in one place an opening, out of which issued a small rivulet, we followed it up about four miles or more, till we reached its head, the source of the Flathead River; but not finding a pass to advance further with horses, we tied them, and proceeded on foot. At the head of the rivulet or creek we ascended one of the mountains for more than a mile, till we reached the top, where it was level ground; but the snow there was seven feet deep; nor could we form any idea as to the nature of the country further on, it being thickly covered with timber. So we returned, took our horses, and got back to the camp late in the evening, to pass another comfortless night.

*March 14th.*—During this day, I got six of my most trusty men ready, with snow-shoes and four days' provisions, and sent them across the mountains to ascertain the depth of snow, the nature of the pass, and the distance to the other side. Their instructions led them to follow the road along the creek, where I had been on the 13th. We shall now leave them to pursue their journey, while we notice the occurrences about the camp.

The men I had despatched were no sooner started, than I sent off four others, to see if any other more favourable opening could be discovered in a different direction, while I and a few others proceeded in another quarter; but both parties proved unsuccessful. So we all returned, hungry, fatigued, and discouraged; and none more so than myself, although I had to assume cheerfulness, in order to encourage others.

*March 15th.*—The sun had scarcely appeared over the mountain ridges, before some of our people called out "Indians, Indians;" when we beheld, emerging from the woods, five solitary wretches on snow-shoes, coming towards our camp. On their arrival, I was rejoiced to find that they were Snakes, as I expected to get some interesting information from them respecting the mountain passes and other matters. They were, however, anything but intelligent: we could neither understand them, nor they us, consequently we could learn nothing from them.

These strangers were the very picture of wretchedness, and had a singularly-odd appearance; they were wrapped up in buffalo-hides with the hair next to their skin, and caps of wolfskin with the ears of that animal erect as if alive; and they resembled rather walking ghosts than living men. Their condition, however, excited compassion. They belonged, if we could judge from the jargon they spoke, to the mountain Snakes. Yet, with all their ignorance, I intended attaching them to our party, had not an unforeseen circumstance prevented it.

The day after the five Snakes arrived, two of the hunters came running into the camp almost breathless, calling out, "A war-party, a war-party." This announcement rather surprised me: I knew not where a war-party could come from at that season of the year, and in such a part of the country as we were in; as Indians seldom go on war expeditions during winter. We, however, got our big gun ready, match lighted, and all hands armed in a few minutes; when I observed at a short distance a large body of Indians coming down the slope of an hill, having every appearance of a war-party. On their approaching our camp, not knowing what might happen, I immediately ordered the Snakes off to the woods, telling them to join us again as soon as the storm had passed over; but we never saw them afterwards.

When the Indians who were approaching us had got within two hundred yards of our camp, they made a halt, and collecting in a group, stood still. At this group we pointed our gun. Taking then a flag in my hand and one man with me, we went up to them; I telling my people at the time that if there was danger, or the Indians attempted anything to us, I would wave a handkerchief as a signal for them to fire off the gun at once. They, however, proved to be a mixture of Nez Percés and Shaw-ha-ap-tens, eighty-four in number, headed by two of the principal chiefs. We then all joined the camp.

Although not a war-party, nor our declared enemies, yet they are not at all times friendly when abroad, and I could have very well dispensed with their visit; but under existing difficulties, they were hailed with a heart-felt welcome by most of my people, particularly the Iroquois.

It will be recollected, that some time ago we fell in with six Nez Percés, with whom two of my Iroquois had exchanged their guns for horses; which horses, it would appear, did not belong to the fellows who had sold them, but belonged to our visitors: the chiefs claimed them as soon as they arrived, mentioning the six Nez Percés, and the place where they had stolen the horses. The Iroquois had therefore to deliver them up; and I was not displeased at it. When the Indians were going off, however, I interposed in behalf of the Iroquois, and the chiefs consented to give them two old guns in lieu of the new ones they had given for the horses.

On this occasion, the head chief told me that since we had passed Hell's Gates, the Blackfeet had stolen, at two different times, 135 of the Nez Percés and Flathead's horses. He also informed me that five of the Snakes had been at the camp of the former on an embassy of peace, succeeded in the object of their mission, and returned loaded with presents: it was not likely, however, that the five wretches we had seen were the delegates spoken of. In reference to the pass through the mountain, the absorbing question with me, the chief observed that we could not possibly pass before the month of May; and then the only practicable road was in the direction my men had gone: information which was not calculated to cheer us in our present situation. At the expiration of two days all the Indians left us, but not before they had rifled the unprincipled Iroquois of almost every article they possessed, in exchange for Indian toys.

Expecting hourly the return of the six men I had sent across the mountain on the 14th, I had been revolving in my own mind the best plan to be pursued. In the meantime, however, as I expected their report would be such as would rather discourage any further advance, and as such might have a decided effect on the conduct of my people, I resolved on going to meet them, in order to prepare their report before it reached our camp, and to place it before the people in its most encouraging features. So I set off under the pretence of going to hunt; but after proceeding some five or six miles, and waiting all day, I returned at night unsuccessful, telling my people of course that I had seen plenty of game, but failed in killing any.

I passed a sleepless night, and getting up early the next morning, and telling my people that I was going off again to hunt, I set out to wait, with anxious forebodings, the arrival of my men. I had not been long at my station before I was agreeably relieved by their arrival; and the more so by their having loads of buffalo meat on their backs: a very welcome article to us in our situation, for animals had become very scarce about the camp, and our hunters had to go a long distance before finding any. The men had been six days on their journey, and two of them were almost snow blind: this grievous and painful malady often afflicts people travelling on snow in the spring of the year. We, however, sat down on the crust of the snow, struck a fire, and made a meal on the flesh they had brought with them. During all this time, Grand Paul, the chief man, related the story of their journey; which I will give the reader in his own words.

"From the head of the creek we proceeded across the mountain in a south-easterly direction. The first three miles were thickly wooded, and the snow from six to eight feet deep, with a strong crust on the top. Afterwards, the country became more open, with occasional small prairies here and there; the snow, however, keeping the same depth, with the crust still harder and harder on the top as we advanced, for about three miles further, till we had reached fully the middle of the mountain. From thence, all along to the other side, a distance of six miles more, the snow ranged from five to six feet deep, with the crust very strong, till we got to the open plains. The distance, therefore, across, is twelve long miles—a distance and depth of snow that can never be passed with horses in its present state. Beyond the mountain is a large open plain, over which the snow is scarcely a foot deep. There we found plenty of buffalo, sixteen of which we killed; but for want of wood and other materials we could not make stages to preserve the meat, but had to abandon it to the wolves, excepting the little we have brought with us."

Here, then, was a description of the mountain pass, as related by those who had examined it; so that we knew something of the extent of the difficulties before us. According to the plan in my own mind, I instructed the men how they were to act on getting to the camp, in order that they might not discourage the people; who at this time required but the shadow of an excuse to turn back. "Pass we must," said I to them. "You will, therefore, proceed to the camp—without, however, letting any one know that you had seen me—and the story that you will tell there will be thus: that the mountain is only eight, instead of twelve miles"—for it appeared to me very possible that the men themselves might have exaggerated the distance; "that, after the first three miles, the snow gets less and less; and that a south wind, with a few fine days, which we may now hourly expect, would soon reduce the quantity of snow. The difficulty of passing will be easily overcome; and once on the opposite side, buffalo for ourselves and grass for our horses will be abundant. Thus a few days' exertions would put all our troubles and difficulties behind us, and in plenty of beaver we should soon forget our toil, and make up for lost time."

The men went off to the camp, and did just as I had told them. I returned late in the evening, but without having killed any game; so that my people, of course, marked me down in their own minds as a blundering hunter. On reaching the camp, I of course pretended not to know of my men's arrival, went up to them, and asked the news of their trip; when Grand Paul, in the presence of all, repeated the story I had put into his mouth respecting the road, the snow, and the distance.

With all the difficulties of the undertaking pressing on my mind, I assembled the head men of the different parties, and several others; and we held a council on the steps to be taken in order to cross the mountain. But our council was very discordant. Some began by observing that the undertaking was utterly impossible; others smiled at the folly of such an attempt; while some thought it even madness to attempt making a road over such a field of snow. Nettled at their obstinacy, I instantly checked their remarks by observing that I did not call them together to decide on the possibility or impossibility of making the road, having settled that point already in my own mind; but simply to have their opinions on what they might consider the easiest and best way of doing it: for do it we must; and the sooner they became unanimous the better.

This sudden check caused such a long pause, that I got alarmed lest they would not speak at all. After some time, however, old Pierre broke silence by observing, that "We might try horses." Others remarked that "It would be sooner done on foot;" while some said nothing at all, but observed a sullen silence. The general voice, however, was for turning back. Here I had to interrupt them again. I told them turning back was out of the question. Some then observed that we might remain where we were until the fine weather would make the road for us. Old Pierre again spoke in favour of trying the road; some others spoke to the same effect. On this occasion I had every reason to be satisfied with the conduct of old Pierre, the Irogoing; while on the other hand, John Grey and his confederacies opposed those who were for making the road. On this occasion the disaffected were the most listened to; and Grey opposed everything but turning back. At last, however, they all agreed to try the road any way I wished.

I then represented to them the necessity for our persevering in the direction we were in, and that without a moment's delay; that according to Paul's report, there were only eight miles, which would scarcely be 300 yards to each; and that the joint efforts of so many men and horses would soon remove the trifling difficulties before us; my opinion, therefore, was that we should set about making the road on the following day. To this they all agreed, and we parted in good spirits.

I began to think that all would go on well; but I soon found out, to my great disappointment, that what was settled within doors was soon forgotten out of doors; for when our meeting broke up, our resolutions fell to the ground. Old Pierre, even, began to waver, and for every one that was in favour of making the road, ten were against it; to add to our perplexities, there unfortunately fell, during the night, more than a foot of snow.

*March 20th.*—Notwithstanding the conflicting opinions regarding the road, and the unlooked-for fall of snow, I ultimately succeeded in getting forty-five men to start with eighty horses, to begin the road; and never did I set out on any undertaking with less hope of success than I did on this. On arriving at the place, we were for some time at a loss how to begin; but after a good deal of manœuvring, one man on snow-shoes took the foremost horse by the bridle, while another applied the whip, to urge the animal on. When it had made several plunges forward, it became fatigued, and would neither lead nor drive; so there we left it in the snow, with nothing to be seen but the head and ears above the surface.

The second was then whipped up alongside of the first, and urged forward, making several plunges still further on; and then it lay in the snow, some six or seven yards a-head of the other. The third did the same, and so on until the last; when nothing was to be seen of our eighty horses but a string of heads and ears above the snow! We then dragged out the first, next the second, and so on, till we had them all back again. The difficulty of getting them extricated was greater than that of urging them forward; but we were partly recompensed by the novelty of the scene, and the mirth and glee which the operation diffused among the people. All this was very well for a while; but the men, as well as the horses, soon got tired of it. This single operation, for we only went over all the horses once, occupied us nine hours; but we got 580 yards of the road half made, and returned to camp after dark.

Our first attempt, although an arduous one, produced no very flattering result—scarcely a quarter of a mile of road; but I represented to the people that it was far beyond my expectation; though in my own mind, the task appeared beyond our means of accomplishing, and one of the most discouraging undertakings I had ever attempted. And if so hopeless under shelter of the woods, what would it be out in the open plains, where the road would be liable, from every blast of wind, drift, or snow, to be filled up in as many hours as we should spend days in opening it? I, however, put the best face on things, and did everything in my power to cherish hope, which was so necessary to encourage my people to persevere and finish the task which we had begun.

*March* 21*st.*—After some hesitation among the people, we again resumed our labours at the road; but out of forty men and eighty-five horses which had set out in the morning, twenty-eight of the former and fifty of the latter were all that reached the ground. Thus after eight hours' hard toil, in much the same way as the day before, we only made the distance of 370 yards, when dark night brought us back to our quarters. With various degrees of success, and much anxiety and labour, we continued, doing more or less each day, until the 27th, when we reached the extremity of the woods. But in the open plains our progress promised to be exceedingly slow and discouraging, both on account of the additional distance we had to travel backwards and forwards, as well as the uncertainty of the winds and drift, which filled up the road nearly as fast as we could open it. Nor had we, after eight days' harassing labour, got over more than one-third of the distance! Although, if anything, the depth of the snow had decreased, yet in no place was it under seven feet. There were also other inconveniences; the mornings were cold as in winter, but during the day the sun melted the snow on our clothes and made them uncomfortable, while in the evening they froze, and became stiff on our backs. The task was so disheartening, that on the last day I could only muster eight men and a few horses; and before night I found myself left at the task with only four of that number: I alone worked with heart and hand.

After smoking our pipes, we turned our faces towards the camp; but not to enjoy pleasure; for a dark and discouraging gloom had now spread its influence from one end of the camp to the other. Still trying, however, to show a cheerful countenance, I began to praise our exertions, and admire the progress we had made, in order to draw from the better-affected portion of my people a full disclosure of their feelings on the subject of the road; although I could read their feelings and their thoughts as well as I knew my own. Disappointment now appeared inevitable, and I had soon to regret that I had given them the opportunity of expressing themselves; for their looks alone, without words, might have convinced any man that nothing was working within but a determined stand against any more road-making. I therefore changed the subject as quickly as possible.

In this perplexing situation I felt that something must be done without delay; I therefore began to mention to them the advantages we should derive from changing our plan of proceeding altogether. Not that I really thought we could better it; but I foresaw that without something new to divert their present feelings, we should never advance.

If discouraged before, I found but little to cheer or console me in the camp. Provisions were scarce; neither did our horses more than ourselves fare too well: everything, in fact, seemed to be against us.

The greatest difficulty, however, was with the treacherous Iroquois, who in proportion as other troubles embarrassed me, never failed to take advantage of them; and at this time it was rumoured that they were trying to diffuse disaffection throughout the whole party. Perceiving a storm to be fast gathering, I prepared to avert it; and immediately convened a meeting, not only of the four principal men, as they were called—for their influence as well as their fidelity was at an end—but of all hands.

After setting forth the great progress that we had made, in so short a time, and awarding the praise that was due to their unwearied exertions, I proposed, as an improvement, that there should be a week's respite from labour, in order to lay in a stock of provisions and to give time for the snows to decrease in the mountains and on the other side; then, with a few fine days, we should be able to finish the road in a short time. And as the horse plan did not succeed well, I proposed that we should adopt a more efficient and expeditious plan of proceeding, which was this:—We should get mallets and wooden shovels made; two men, with mallets, would break the crust of the snow, the shovel men would follow them, and shovel it away, while the greater part would keep behind, packing down the snow with their feet. Twenty men would be thus employed, and the others would guard the camp, and provide food; and those who worked in the snow one day would remain in camp the next: we should thus make short work of it. Having stated my plan in a few words, I paused for their answer. Their silence was enough.

I now found, but too late, that I had committed a blunder in assembling all the camp together; for it is always easier to gain on the few than on the many. At last, they broke silence; and twenty voices spoke at once. I was mortified to find that my private instructions to Grand Paul, respecting the length of the road, had become known; which by no means mended the matter. John Grey stated, that "the road across the mountain was twenty miles, and the snows nearer twenty feet deep, than seven." Old Pierre and others observed, "We had no provisions for ourselves, and our animals were starving;" while many swore against making any more of the road: "We will neither work with mallets nor shovels." In short, the universal cry was for turning back, and relinquishing the road as impracticable. "Where are the provisions?" was the general cry; "our families are now starving." I told them that, if we had no provisions, we had hunters, we had guns and ammunition. "I will answer for provisions," said I: "let there be but a good understanding and unanimity among ourselves; secure that, and I will answer for the rest. Besides," continued I, "in accomplishing the task before us, we can boast of having done what was never before equalled by man in this country."

After some time, and a great deal of speechifying, a few of them began to relent, and expressed themselves friendly to the plan of making the road; simply, I supposed, because it was new. Among the first, were some of the Iroquois: we must give every one their due; and had I not known their character too well, I might have been led to believe that they were in right good faith. Even John Grey seemed to adopt my views; this man, an Iroquois half-breed from Montreal, and educated, had no small degree of influence over his countrymen; but he was unfortunately a refractory and base character. However, after stating my views to them, they all agreed to continue the road, after a week's respite. I began once more to entertain some hopes of success; we smoked our pipes together, and parted for the night in the most friendly manner.

Notwithstanding this apparently good understanding, I soon learnt that John Grey had been very busy in trying to poison the minds of the Iroquois and of the others, by strongly advising them to turn back and not to submit to any more road-making: he urged that I was but one man, and could not force them to it; that they had dug long enough in snow; that they would have a summer's work of it, and he doubted if they could do it in one summer; and he swore that back he was determined to go, and he would like to see the man that would prevent him. Such language, among people already tired and disaffected, had great influence.

I knew that Grey was disseminating an ill feeling in the camp, and I was of course preparing, in the isolated position in which I stood, to counteract it. Nothing, however, declared itself openly until the second day in the evening. I had hoped his machinations would have failed of their effect; but a little before sunset he came to my tent, saying that he wished to see me. I told him to come in, and, after sitting down for a few minutes, he said that "he was deputed by the Iroquois and other freemen to let me know that they regretted their promise made at the council, and could not fulfil it; that they were all resolved on abandoning the undertaking, and turning back!" He urged, "that by remaining to make the road, they would lose the spring hunt; and besides that they were tired of remaining in the large party, and wished to hunt apart: moreover, that they did not come to this country to be making roads; they came to hunt beaver. As for myself," said John, "others may do what they please, but I shall turn back: I am a free man, and I suppose I can do as I please."

John having proceeded thus far, I got out of all patience, and interrupted him, by observing "whatever you have got to say, John, on your own behalf I am ready to hear, but not one word on behalf of any one else. This," I continued, "savours very much of a combination to defraud the Company and disappoint me. You have all taken a wrong view of things: every rose," continued I, "has its thorn, John; so has the hunting of beaver. You say that by remaining to make the road you will lose the spring hunt; you will do no such thing; but by turning back you will lose not only the spring but the fall hunt. The spring here is later by a month than in any other part of the country. Your plan is a bad one; even were it at your choice, which is not the case. Follow my advice, John: I alone am answerable for your hunts. If you disliked large parties, you should have remained at home, and not have come to this country at all: small parties cannot hunt here. As to your digging in snows and making roads, it is of two evils perhaps the least: it is better for you to be making roads for a few days, than to have for many weeks to contend with a powerful and dangerous enemy; which would be the case if we passed through Hell's Gates and had to fight our way among the Blackfeet. We have all embarked on a sea of troubles; great quantities of furs are not to be secured in these parts without fatigues, cares, hardships, and perils. My advice therefore to you, and to all, is to submit to circumstances, and abandon the idea of turning back."

John, however, persisted in his opinion, and swore that neither fair words nor anything else should alter his mind, that "back he would go." "You are a most unreasonable man," replied I; "you gave your consent two nights ago; things are not worse now than they were then, and you now withdraw that consent. But I did wrong in asking your consent, I ought rather to have commanded it; and for the future I am determined to ask no man's consent: if you attempt to turn back, I shall certainly try to stop you, or any one else:" on my saying so, John abruptly got up, bade me good night, and went off.

Grey's conduct made me pass an anxious and uncomfortable night. As usual, I got up early in the morning, and soon afterwards, sure enough, as he had said, John collected, saddled, and loaded his horses ready for a start, and every eye in the camp was directed to witness his departure. Affairs had now come to a crisis; the success or failure of the expedition depended on the issue. I was determined now to act, and resolutely went up to him with a cocked pistol in my hand, ordering him either to pay his debt, or unsaddle his horses and turn them off with the others, or he was a dead man. John, seeing no person interfere, unsaddled his horses, and I returned to my tent. Not another word was spoken, and here the affair ended.

Although I had now succeeded in settling the knotty point with Grey, yet I was not altogether without my fears that something might take place to disturb our arrangements: it was evident from the sullen conduct of the Iroquois, that if left together they would still be plotting mischief. To divide them as quickly as possible was my only plan. I therefore fitted out and despatched a party of ten men to cross the mountain in pursuit of buffalo; not forgetting to place four of the Iroquois among them. The other hunters were dispersed in every direction, in quest of smaller game; and I kept my friend John Grey in the camp with myself.

The small deer had become very scarce, and in my anxiety to get a stock of provisions laid up, that we might proceed with the road, I offered a reward of a new gun to the hunter who should prove himself most deserving. This had a good effect; but as the valleys furnished but little, they had to proceed to the mountains in search of the big-horned, or mountain sheep, as they are called. A third party took to the woods to make mallets and shovels. Thus I had them all divided the next day, and this arrangement promised to preserve peace and good order for a time.

Scarcity of provisions troubled me greatly, and to ensure success as far as possible, I studied to make such a distribution of the people, that neither plots nor treachery could well be carried on without detection; and with strict economy in the camp, and an equitable division of everything that came into it, we hoped to guard against the worst. The big-horn sheep party had good luck during several days; but those animals were smaller in size than I had been in the habit of seeing elsewhere, with heads very disproportionate to the size of their bodies, and horns still more disproportionate to the size of the head. The average weight of these animals was 70 lbs., and the head of the male generally weighed as much as a third of the body, while the horns were twice the weight of the head without them. One of the ram's horns brought into our camp measured forty-nine inches in length, following the curve or greatest circle round the convex side; and the circumference in the thickest part was twenty-eight inches: this horn weighed eleven pounds.

On the seventh day after starting, the buffalo hunters, from across the mountain, arrived successful; and our supplies from all quarters put us in possession of eight days' provisions in advance, with which we prepared to resume our labours at the road.

*April 3rd.*—At six o'clock in the morning, after an interval of seven days, I set out with forty men and seventy horses, with shovels and mallets for each—John Grey among the number—to resume our labours at the road. After reaching the place, however, the weather turned out so bad with sleet and snow, that we were forced to return home without doing much; and, what was still worse, many parts of the road already made were filled up again. This was a very discouraging circumstance, and caused a good deal of murmuring: indeed, the distance from our camp to the scene of operations, being not less than nine miles, and the return another nine, was of itself, without any other labour, a day's work. Many hints were given by the Iroquois that had I now and then a dram of rum to give them, my road would soon be made. I knew myself that a little, in our present state, would have done more than anything else towards hastening on the road; and I would at this time have given twenty guineas for as many pints of rum, had it been in my power to get them.

*April 4th.*—At an early hour this morning we were again at work, with the same number of men as yesterday. Whether from the novelty of our shovel operations, or that the new plan was better than the old one, I could not say; but we made, in the usual depth of snow and in the same number of hours, 810 yards: though we were so tired at night as to be hardly able to mount our horses.

On the 5th, with the same number of men as the day before, we only made about 450 yards, although we laboured for the same number of hours.

On the 6th we did nothing at all. I attempted to start in the morning, but the attempt proved fruitless, there being a good deal of reluctance and altercation among the parties; so that I had at last to yield to circumstances, and there was no road-making that day. I was rather apprehensive that, as the conflicting opinions were marked with a good deal of bad feeling, they would have resulted in a second break-up; but, fortunately, we got all our differences arranged, and closed the day in harmony.

*April 7th.*—Early this morning, I started with thirty-five men, and happening to fall on a small ridge part of the way, we succeeded in opening rather more than a mile in length, in almost bare plains. This was cheering, and greatly revived our sinking spirits; but we were kept in constant alarms, fearing the wind and drift should rise: for had it blown but an hour it might have destroyed the labour of days. Our hopes now rested on calm weather, and we had to labour day and night till we should accomplish the task before us. Six of the men volunteered to work all night, some encamped on the ground, and others went home. I was among the latter number; for I could not venture to sleep out one night, lest new troubles arising in the camp should disarrange all my plans.

*April* 8*th*.—I set out at sunrise this morning with every man and boy I could muster, leaving only five men to guard the camp; and not a murmur was heard. Our success now depending on despatch, several of the women were in attendance, with horses to carry us back at night. During last night, the six men who volunteered their services had only made about fifty yards. This day, to our annoyance, there fell a good deal of drizzling rain, which wetted us to the skin, and in the evening our clothes froze on our backs and became stiff; but the people, notwithstanding, encamped at the edge of the woods, instead of going home, so as to begin early in the morning; I and another man only returning to the camp.

*April* 9*th*.—At an early hour, and before a single man of the party who had slept out had got his eyes open, I was on the ground to rouse them up. And although we began to work somewhat later in the day than usual, yet, before night, our day's labour proved the best we had made; having with our shovels, our mallets, our feet, and the additional assistance of fifty-eight horses, beaten down a distance of nearly two miles in length. After this day's labour, and not until then, did my people entertain a hope of success: from that time we all indulged the anticipation of accomplishing our task in spite of every obstacle. The wind alone, over which we had no control, was all I now dreaded. The two next days, the 10th and the 11th, our labour was severe.

*April 12th.*—At five o'clock in the afternoon of this day, I with four others, after a day of severe toil, reached the other side on horseback; but being too late, and our horses too tired to return, we encamped there. The dread of the wind blowing kept me from sleeping, and when I did slumber a little after the fatigue of the day, it was only to dream of fine roads and pleasant walks, and then awake to blame my fancy for having deceived me. Nor was it till we had reached the other side, that I was fully aware of my situation; for had it come on to blow, the road through which we had forced our way would have been rendered impassible, and I should then have found myself completely separated from my people for days: all our labour and anxiety would then have been to no purpose, had my people taken advantage of the opportunity thus offered to return back. But, fortunately, the night was calm, and I got back and joined my people on the 13th.

On the 14th we raised camp, and bidding farewell to the Valley of Troubles, where we had been kept in anxious suspense for thirty-three days, we put up for the night at the head of the creek, or foot of the mountain, prior to our crossing it. And an anxious night we passed.

The spot on which we now encamped forms the extreme point of Flathead River, a distance of 345 miles from its entrance into the main Columbia a little above the Kettle Falls; of which some 250 are navigable for craft of moderate size, and the rest for loaded small canoes.

On the top of the mountain before us, over which our road led, and not more than a mile from our camp, was a small circular spring of water issuing out of the ground; I stood over it for some time, smoking my pipe, with a foot on each side of it. Yet this spring is the source, as far as I can learn, of the great Missouri River; which, after meandering through the mountain, nearly parallel with our road, crossed the grand prairie, where, uniting with several other small streams, a river fifty feet broad and about two and a half deep is formed, which then flows in an easterly direction.

*April 15th.*—Long before daylight, we were all on foot, in order to profit by the snow crust in passing the mountain. When all were ready, I took my stand on the side of the road as they began to ascend, to see that all passed. As soon as we had reached the summit of the mountain, the string, a mile and a half in length, began to form. Six men, with about thirty of the light horses, led the van; the loaded horses came next; the families followed;

and I, with four of the men, brought up the rear.

Every now and then a halt unavoidably took place. A load was upset or deranged; a horse got engulphed, or some of the families became entangled in the snow; so that it was one constant run forward and backward, lifting, adjusting, and encouraging all day. It was a novel scene in the wilderness: nothing appearing above the surface of the snow, of all that was moving, but the heads and shoulders of the riders. Children were crying with hunger, men complaining of thirst, women screaming with affright, and dogs howling; yet, amidst all this bustle, anxiety, and confusion, we pressed forward, and got safely across, after fifteen hours' exertions, just as the sun was setting, and without loss or accident to either man or beast. My hope now was, that the snow-storm might render the road behind us impassible to both man and beast; so as to prevent the Iroquois or any one else from attempting to turn back, or give us further annoyance.

But the struggle was over. The distance, however, proved to be neither eight miles, as was stated, nor yet twelve, as Paul had given us to understand, but eighteen! And, perhaps, few men in the ordinary routine of their lives in this country, ever suffered more anxiety, or laboured harder to accomplish the task they had undertaken, than we did during the past month.

Making this road through the snow took the united labour of fifty men and 240 horses, with all the other available means within our power, for twenty-one days. It must be allowed to have been an arduous undertaking, with such a medley of people and so difficult to manage; the more so, when it is taken into consideration that our supper at night depended on the good or bad luck of our hunters during the day. To their exertions and perseverance, indeed, no small merit was due.

# CHAPTER XI.

Camp regulations—Beaver—Tracks of enemies—Hot spring—Snow-storm—Narrow escape—Missouri—Lewis and Clarke's track—Successful trapping—Dangerous passes—The battle—Seven trappers killed—Piegans roasted—Hardihood—Iroquois shot—Horrid cruelties—Revenge—Salmon River—Herds of buffalo—Canoe Point—Young grass—War roads—Night-watch—Heedless trappers—Martin and his horses—Scouting parties—Discouraging prospects—Hackana in favour—New prospects—Dangerous roads—Disappointments—Effect—Hackana in disgrace—A horse killed—The alarm—Escape of a child—Back turn again—Twelve days' experience—Return to Canoe Point—The beaver cache—Swimming—Salmon River—Hot springs—Enemies appear—Pursuit—Buffalo—Forlorn trappers—Piegan war-party—Fruitless search—The mistake—Two men robbed—Looking the wrong way—Subterraneous river—A four days' ramble—Cold—Horses die—Division of the party—River Malade—Alarm—War-party—A night's dancing—Indian cunning—A horse killed—Scalps—Trapping difficulties—Watch—Perverse trappers—The alarm—Paying too dear for a drink of cold water—A horse killed—A scamper—Piegans again—Chief's declaration—New road—Frightful passes—Hard shifts—Reid's River—Dismal prospects—Disaffected people—A stand still—Two Bannatees—Their story—Three Bannatees—Their fears.

THE mountain, with all its perplexities and difficulties, being now behind us, we considered ourselves on hunting ground; and also on enemy's ground: both circumstances requiring additional care. For these reasons, new and stringent regulations, for our camp by night as well as our proceedings by day, became absolutely necessary. It was, therefore, settled, as to the night-watch, that all the horses should in future be collected every evening into one band, close by our camp, and there hobbled and guarded; and that not less than four men at a time should be on the watch after dark, to be relieved once every night, with a superintendent to each. As to our proceedings by day, it was agreed that all hands should raise camp together; that no person should run a-head, either to hunt or set traps, nor lag behind, but that while travelling they should keep close together; that no traps should be put in the water before the party encamped, and that no person should sleep out of camp. The safety and success of the expedition depending upon a rigid observance of these rules, it was decided that any individual wilfully disregarding them should be punished.

We now proposed to advance through the mountains without any plan as to our route, as the appearance of the country for beaver and other local circumstances would henceforth regulate all our movements. Leaving, therefore, our mountain encampment, we advanced in nearly an easterly direction, crossing in succession five small branches of the head waters of the Missouri. On one of these it was that M'Donald lost his man Anderson, last year, by the Piegans. After proceeding some distance, we followed down one of these creeks for upwards of twenty miles; but during all that distance we only met with one solitary tree on its banks: on this woodless creek, we encamped the second day, and took seventy beaver at the first lift. Here, however, fresh Piegan tracks were frequently seen, which admonished us to take care of our horses; the new regulations were, therefore, strictly enforced, both day and night.

At a little distance from our camp, we found one of those hot springs so often mentioned in former expeditions; but this being the first I had ever seen, I viewed it with some degree of curiosity. It was of a circular form, ten feet in diameter, but only about nine inches deep, having a white sediment at bottom; the water was reddish and tasting of iron; no grass grew about its margin. The water, although hot, did not boil.

On leaving Hot Spring Encampment the following day, and while crossing a large open plain, we were suddenly overtaken by a furious snow-storm. In a moment the day was almost turned to night, so that we got completely bewildered; one was running against another, without any knowing whither to go for shelter. In this perplexing situation I called out for each to shift for himself; and, meantime, I with some others went off, and after several hours' wandering got to some woods a little before dusk, where we passed the night. The storm continuing with unabated violence, we could not stir all the next day; the day following, however, the weather clearing up, we began to travel about in search of our lost companions, and by night we had got together once more; except two of the Iroquois and their families, in all seven persons: as their horses were found with their saddles and baggage on their backs, we expected that those unfortunates had perished in the storm. All hands were off in search of them; and we kept looking along the adjacent woods, never thinking they would have lodged in the bare plains. But I and some others happening to cross the plain where the storm had overtaken us, and seeing a dog belonging to them howling in a low place, it at once confirmed our suspicion that they had perished; we therefore approached the spot with anxious steps, and after some time we, by mere chance, found them alive: buried, however, under two or three feet of snow. As soon as the storm broke out, they had dismounted, and rolling themselves up in a leathern tent, lay quiet; they had tried to get up, and had made their way to the light of the sun, but the snow having melted upon them, their clothes had got wet, and the weather was so piercingly cold that they durst not venture to leave their hiding-place. There they had been for three nights and two days, without food or fire; and they must have soon perished for want of both, if we had not come to their relief; as they had nothing to kindle a fire, and were at least six miles from the woods. We dug them out of the snow, and wrapping them up in part of our clothing, got them to our camp; where, after some care, they all recovered.

After leaving Stormy Encampment, we wandered about through the intricate passes of the mountains, trapping and hunting with tolerable success for six days. During this time we passed the middle branch of the Missouri, and the track where Lewis and Clarke crossed over from that river to the waters of the Columbia, on their journey to the Pacific, in 1804. While in the last defile, we took ninety-five beaver in one morning, and sixty more during the same day; but the next time we set our traps, we only took three. Before we got out of part of our rugged road, we had, in one place, to ascend on the east side of a mountain for about two miles, and then descend the same on the west side. For the first mile the descent was so steep, that anything dropped from the top rolled down several hundred yards without stopping; and for the next mile in length, the intricate and tortuous windings were so short, so frequent, and so steep—sometimes up, sometimes down, side ways, cross ways, and in perpendicular steps—that we had numerous hair-breadth escapes, with ourselves as well as our horses, before we reached the bottom; which, however, we providentially did without accident.

Being now relieved from the mountains on the east side, we considered ourselves in the Snake territory; a country comparatively more open than that which we had been wandering through for some time past. Advancing in a westerly direction, we came to that memorable spot, where, as already noticed, M'Donald had lost seven of his men in a pitched battle with the Piegans, the year before; and as we promised to notice the particulars of that unfortunate rencontre, we give it here, in the words of those who were eye-witnesses.

One day, when they had travelled until dark in search of water, they found some at the bottom of a deep and rocky ravine, down which they went and encamped. They had seen no traces of enemies during the day, and being tired, they all went to sleep, without keeping watch. In the morning, however, just at the dawn of day, they were saluted from the top of the ravine, before they got up, with a volley of balls about their ears; without, however, any being killed or wounded: one of them had the stock of his gun pierced through with a ball, and another of them his powder-horn shivered to pieces; but this was all the injury they sustained from the enemy's discharge. The alarm was instantly given, all hands in confusion sprang up and went out to see what was the matter; some with one shoe on and the other off, others naked, with a gun in one hand and their clothes in the other. When they perceived the Indians on the top of the rocks, yelling and flourishing their arms, the whites gave a loud huzza, and all hands were collected together in an instant; but the Indians instead of taking advantage of their position, wheeled about and marched off without firing another shot.

M'Donald, at the head of thirty men, set out to pursue them; but finding the ravine too steep and rocky to ascend, they were apprehensive that the sudden disappearance of the Indians was a stratagem to entrap them, when they might have been popped off by the enemy from behind stones and trees, without having an opportunity of defending themselves. Acting on this opinion, they returned, and taking a supply of powder and ball with them, they mounted their horses, to the number of forty-five, and then pursued the enemy, leaving twenty men behind to guard the camp. When our people got to the head of the ravine, the Indians were about a mile off, and all on foot, having no horses, with the exception of five for carrying their luggage; and our people, before they could get up with them, had to pass another ravine still deeper and broader than the one they were encamped in, so that before they had got down on one side of it the enemy had got up on the other side. And here again the Indians did not avail themselves of their advantage, but allowed our people to follow without firing a shot at them, as if encouraging them on; and so bold and confident were they, that many of them bent themselves down in a posture of contempt, by way of bidding them defiance.

As soon as our people had got over the second ravine, they took a sweep, wheeled about, and met the Indians in the teeth; then dismounting, the battle began, without a word being spoken on either side. As soon as the firing commenced, the Indians began their frantic gestures, and whooped and yelled with the view of intimidating; they fought like demons, one fellow all the time waving a scalp on the end of a pole: nor did they yield an inch of ground till more than twenty of them lay dead; at last, they threw down their guns, and held up their hands as a signal of peace. By this time our people had lost three men, and not thinking they had yet taken ample vengeance for their death, they made a rush on the Indians, killed the fellow who held the pole, and carried off the scalp and the five horses. The Indians then made a simultaneous dash on one side, and got into a small coppice of wood, leaving their dead on the spot where they fell. Our people supposed that they had first laid down their arms and next taken to the bush because they were short of ammunition, as many of the shots latterly were but mere puffs. Unfortunately for the Indians, the scalp taken proved to be none other than poor Anderson's, and this double proof of their guilt so enraged our people, that to the bush they followed them.

M'Donald sent to the camp for buck-shot, and then poured volleys into the bush among them, from the distance of some twenty or thirty yards, till they had expended fifty-six pounds weight; the Indians all this time only firing a single shot now and then when the folly and imprudence of our people led them too near; but they seldom missed their mark, and here three more of the whites fell. At this part of the conflict, two of our own people, an Iroquois and a Canadian, got into a high dispute which was the bravest man; when the former challenged the latter to go with him into the bush and scalp a Piegan. The Canadian accepted the challenge; taking each other by one hand, with a scalping knife in the other, savage like, they entered the bush, and advanced until they were within four or five feet of a Piegan, when the Iroquois said, "I will scalp this one, go you and scalp another;" but just as the Iroquois was in the act of stretching out his hand to lay hold of his victim the Piegan shot him through the head, and so bespattered the Canadian with his brains that he was almost blind; the latter, however, got back again to his comrades, but deferred taking the scalp.

M'Donald and his men being fatigued with firing, thought of another and a more effectual plan of destroying the Piegans. It blew a strong gale of wind at the time, so they set fire to the bush of dry and decayed wood; it burnt with the rapidity of straw, and the devouring element laid the whole bush in ashes in a very short time. When it was first proposed, the question arose who should go and fire the bush, at the muzzle of the Piegans' guns. "The oldest man in the camp," said M'Donald; "and I'll guard him." The lot fell upon Bastony, a superannuated hunter on the wrong side of seventy; the poor and wrinkled old man took the torch in his hand and advanced, trembling every step with the fear of instant death before him; while M'Donald and some others walked at his heels with their guns cocked. The bush was fired, the party returned, and volleys of buck-shot were again poured into the bush to aid the fire in the work of destruction.

About one hundred yards from the burning bush, was another much larger bush, and while the fire was consuming the one, our people advanced and stationed themselves at the end of the other, to intercept any of the Piegans who might attempt the doubtful alternative of saving themselves by taking refuge in it. To ensure success, our people left open the passage from the one bush to the other, while they themselves stood in two rows, one upon each side, with their guns cocked; suddenly the half-roasted Piegans, after uttering a scream of despair, burst through the flames and made a last and expiring effort to gain the other bush; then our people poured in upon each side of them a fatal volley of ball and buck-shot, which almost finished what the flames had spared.

Yet, notwithstanding all these sanguinary precautions, a remnant escaped by getting into the bush. The wounded victims who fell under the last volley, the Iroquois dealt with in their own way—with the knife.

After the massacre was ended, our people collected their dead and returned to the camp at sunset; not we should suppose to rejoice, but rather to mourn. We afterwards learned that only seven out of the seventy-five which formed the party of the unfortunate Piegans, returned home to relate the mournful tale. Although our people were drawn into this unfortunate affair with justice on their side, yet they persevered in it with folly and ended it with cruelty: no wonder, then, if they afterwards paid for their cruelty with their own blood.

Leaving the scene of this tragedy, we journeyed on to the westward for some time, until we reached a strong and rapid stream about fifty yards broad, which empties itself into the Great South branch, called by our hunters Salmon River. I thought the more appropriate name would have been Lewis's Fork, as it was the first Columbia waters the exploring party fell on after crossing the Rocky Mountains. This stream forced its way through a very bleak, sterile, and rocky part of the country; yet we crossed it and ascended up the west side for upwards of ninety miles, until we got to a place called Canoe Point, where the different branches from the four points of the compass form a cross.

This stream runs in the direction of north-west. It did not prove rich in beaver, fifty-five at a lift being the most we took at one time, during our journey on it. Here in many places the snow had begun to disappear, and the young grass grew up fast; and here our horses fed, for the first time since we left Flathead Fort, without digging in the snow. The further we advanced, the scarcer were the beaver; we often took no more than twenty a day. Buffalo were abundant, immense herds of these animals being seen in every direction; but they were not fat at this season: in one of the valleys through which we passed, there could not have been less than 10,000 in one herd, out of which our hunters killed sixty; and we passed on, leaving them still feeding on the young grass. Here game of every description was in the utmost abundance, deer were feeding in herds, and wild fowls of every kind covered the waters; yet we seldom disturbed any of them, except for amusement, for our camp teemed with provisions: nevertheless, so great was the temptation, and so natural is it for hunters and trappers to waste ammunition, that all day, whether travelling or in camp, we heard shots in every direction.

With all this profusion about us, we were not exempt from anxiety; for Blackfeet and Piegan war-roads were everywhere seen, and fresh tracks of men and horses were frequent: yet it was with the utmost difficulty I could convince the people of our dangerous situation, and the necessity of watching their horses strictly at night.

One morning, on getting up at break of day (for early rising is indispensable in these parts) I found twenty-four of the Iroquois horses wandering at large among the hills; on calling the owners to account, who had been on the watch that night, I found that they had turned them out to feed: I ordered the horses to be brought in, and warned them against a repetition of such conduct. But the next morning, I found six more out of the guard, belonging to Martin, another of the Iroquois, who confessed that he had turned his out to feed; a practice neither allowed nor necessary, as our horses had always time enough to eat during the day. I immediately sent off two men for the horses, telling Martin that since he would not take care of them, I should; reminding him that he owed the Company a heavy debt, and that if his horses were stolen his hunt would be at an end, as without them he could never pay his debt, and moreover himself and family would become a burden to the camp; therefore, I should place the horses to his credit, and he and his family might henceforth provide for themselves without horses.

The next morning, on raising camp, I ordered Martin's horses to be loaded, and we set off, leaving him and his family sitting by the fire; the other Iroquois, not wishing to leave Martin behind, lent him some of their horses for the day, so that he journeyed along with us. On putting up at night, old Pierre and two others came to intercede in Martin's behalf; so, after receiving every assurance that they would all take good care of their horses in future, and observe the regulations of the camp, I delivered Martin's horses up to him: this was what I wanted; and the example had, for a long time afterwards, a good effect, not only among the Iroquois, but among the others.

In consequence of the fresh tracks of Indians which had been discovered lately, we selected a strong place for our camp; then, after delivering a fresh supply of ammunition to all hands, I sent out two scouting parties to see that there were no enemies lurking about, and at the same time to search for beaver. Both returned unsuccessful, having seen neither enemy nor beaver; one of the parties passed the defile where the veteran John Day, who died in 1819, was buried; the other party fell on a branch of Reid's River. The day following, I sent out two other exploring parties; but after two days' search, they returned, having met with very few beaver.

At last, I applied to our Snake slave for information; he gave me to understand that he knew the country well, and that there was plenty of beaver in the western quarter, but that the roads were not passable with horses. I decided on sending him and some others to visit that quarter; and at the end of three days they returned, and reported that they had not seen much, but that the further we went the more beaver we should find, and what they had seen promised well to repay the trouble of going there to trap.

I was so pleased with this information, that I gave Hackana (that was the name we had given the Snake) a second-hand gun as a present, which he was not a little proud of; and the people among themselves gave him also several trifling articles, so that our Snake guide, for we honoured him with that title, was held in considerable favour, and promised to be a useful member of our little community in future.

We had, however, reached a point where it became necessary for us to decide on the course we intended to pursue for the rest of the season. I, therefore, called all the people together, and described the country to them, and as it did not appear to me that one side was preferable to the other, I left it to them to make their choice. I then told them that the country to our left, or south-west, would lead us along the foot of the Rocky Mountains to Henry's Fork, and crossing there Lewis's River, or the main south branch, we might proceed by the Blackfeet River to the Buffalo Snakes, the Sherry-dikas, and Bears' Lake, where the country was already known; but on the other hand, if we took the west and south-west side, the country was in many places unknown to the whites, and we should have to run the risk, whether we were successful or not.

Old Pierre and some others observed, "We have already been through the country on our left, and have trapped in that quarter for two years in succession; there is nothing very inviting there; we therefore prefer trying the west quarter." This opinion they all agreed to, and it was much strengthened by Hackana's late report; so we decided on trying the unknown and unfrequented part.

Having now settled our plan of operations, we turned to the right, and entering a defile of the mountains, proceeded on the track our Snake guide had pointed out as leading to a beaver country. We advanced in the direction our guide had been, and found the rocky road most terrific; yet in the hope of soon reaching beaver, we continued till both man and horse were almost exhausted with climbing up and down; we then encamped in a place where our tired animals could not feed nor ourselves get as much level ground as we could sleep on.

Next day, we reached the point where our guide and his companions had turned back, and where it was said that the beaver would well repay the trapper for his troubles; but all we found was a small rocky creek, with scarcely any traces of that animal. We encamped, however, and, after putting one hundred and seventy traps in the water, we only got fifteen beaver. I then questioned our guide, and began to think that he knew nothing of the country, and that we had been duped. We left Creek Disappointment, and proceeded for three days further, but with no better success; here and there we found a creek of brisk running water among the rocks, but the stream seemed to be formed from the melting snow. The place having not the least signs of beaver, we encamped, and resolved on turning back by the way we came.

The people had got into a bad humour with the Snake and their disappointments in this quarter, so that they were ready to quarrel with their shadows; even the women got by the ears, and two of them fought like Amazons, until they had scarcely a rag left on their backs. From Battle River, for that was the name we gave this place, I sent off two or three parties of discovery in various directions, and taking three men with me, we proceeded on the same duty; but although we had travelled all day and slept out, such was the rugged nature of the country, that we had not made the distance of ten miles when we were stopped by perpetual snows: no beaver were to be found.

On the next morning I climbed up to the top of a high rock, but I could see nothing of the country around. This height I called Rock-turn-again; and on the top of it I deposited six balls, two flints, and a piece of tobacco; we then retraced our steps back to the camp. The other parties were likewise unsuccessful; and in their vexation, some were for stripping our Snake impostor naked, others were for tying him to a tree and leaving him.

During the day on which we arrived at this place, we had to make our way over a frightful country. In winding among the rocks on the top of one of the mountains, one of our horses was killed, and a child belonging to one of the freemen was within a hair's breadth of sharing the same fate. On this high ledge of rocks, the horses, and people leading them one after another, formed a string of nearly two miles in length; nor was there in many places room enough for a person to turn round, or look behind him, so narrow and dangerous was the pass. In this situation, a child, who had been tied to one of the saddles, happened to slide, saddle and all, under the horse's belly; when the animal took fright and began to kick, slipped over the brink of the precipice and fell down it, together with the child. The horse, getting jammed between two pieces of the rock, could not move; the mother of the child began to scream, and the alarm spread from one to another; but long before it had reached the extremity of the line, the cause of the alarm had ceased. We heard only the sound, without knowing the cause; and I and many others, thinking that we had been way-laid, and attacked by the enemy, tried to follow the sound, and reach the spot from whence it issued; but the whole party had got into confusion, and some time elapsed before we reached the place. At last, we succeeded; we then let down two men with ropes, and extricated the child; but before we had got the men hauled up again, the horse died from the injuries which it had received.

On getting back to Canoe Point, we resolved on leaving some of our beaver en cache, to lighten our horses; we, therefore, concealed in the face of a bank one thousand beaver, until our return. Our late trial to the west had shaken our confidence in that quarter, and many, therefore, were for abandoning it altogether; so we followed up the east branch before going again to the west.

We prepared to cross the river, and after examining it for some distance, we found a ford; but although not more than seventy-five yards broad, the current carried us so far down, that the distance between where we entered it on one side and where we got out on the other was more than two hundred yards. It being late before we got all over, we encamped for the night on the south bank.

On raising camp, we bent our course for Goddin's River, in an easterly direction; on our way thither we met with several hot springs, with which this country abounds. In one of these I was surprised to see a number of animalcules, as large as flies, swimming about: and they seemed to thrive well in the hot element. I intended to try whether or not these little inhabitants of so warm a climate would not live in cold water, but there was not a drop to be found for miles around, and those I carried along with me died before we reached any cold water.

On passing the height of land between Salmon and Goddin's Rivers, we perceived five men on horseback coming towards us; but they wheeled about immediately on seeing us. Taking them for the advanced guard of a Piegan war-party, the alarm was given, and it being near camping time, we retreated for a short distance; then, after fixing the camp in a secure place near some woods, thirty of us mounted our horses, and set off at full speed in the direction we had seen the horsemen, in order to try and satisfy ourselves who they might be; but they having taken to the mountain we lost all trace of them. We hastened back to our camp, and after putting it in a state of defence, and setting a double guard on our horses, we passed the night in quietness, and awaited the morning in suspense; long before day, however, we were all armed and ready for what might happen; but all appearing quiet, we took a turn round before raising camp, and seeing nothing, we proceeded on our journey.

We saw but very few animals in these parts, and began to get short of provisions; for notwithstanding the abundance which we had met with on Salmon River, we had laid in but a very scanty supply, it being the custom to let the morrow provide for itself.

On reaching Goddin's River, so named after one of my men who discovered it, I sent off eight men to trap it downwards; but made them leave their horses with us, so that they might the better conceal themselves from the enemy. I promised at the same time to pick them up at the south end on a certain day, while the main party proceeded round a range of mountains in order to lay in a supply of buffalo meat; for we expected but few of these animals in the direction we were about to take: moreover, I wished to prepare some of their hides for making canoes, in case we might afterwards require them.

The second day we got to the buffalo, and encamped in Day's Valley, the spot which M'Kenzie and party visited in 1820. It was a most dreary-looking place, and the young grass had scarcely sprung out of the earth, so that our horses fared but poorly: nothing was to be seen but the tracks of buffalo and the traces of war-parties.

While our party were employed in trapping and laying in a stock of provisions, I set off with ten men to examine the country to the south-east. We were absent for four days on our trip, and at the extent of our journey we ascended a high mountain, had a good view of the country, and saw the three pilot knobs quite plain, in the direction of the east. We then passed for some distance along the waters of the main south branch, and came to a spot among the rocks which some Snakes had left in a hurry, their fire being still alive. In their little bulrush hut we found six beaver skins and several other articles, which they had abandoned through fear on our approach. We searched about and tried to find them, as I was very anxious to fall in with some of the nation, in order to obtain information about the country; but in vain. Taking the beaver away with us, and leaving instead articles of more value to them, we returned to our camp, having seen but few beaver on our trip; but the buffalo were in thousands,—a sure sign that there were no enemies about.

As soon as I reached the camp, I despatched two men to River Goddin, in order to bring back the eight men whom I had sent there to trap some time before; as we had changed our plan of proceeding, and resolved, instead of going further to the east, to turn immediately to the west, and follow up our first intention of hunting in that quarter for the season.

The two men set out early in the day, and reached the place appointed at sunset. A little before their arrival, they perceived a smoke, and taking it for granted that it must be our people, they heedlessly advanced among the bushes until they had got within gun-shot of the place, with the view of coming upon them by surprise, and frightening them; but on crossing the end of Goddin's River, which was there only a creek, when close to where the smoke arose, they suddenly perceived that they had fallen, not on their comrades, as they expected, but on a Piegan war-party. On discovering their mistake, they threw themselves from their horses, ran in among the bushes, and got into the creek; the Indians in the meantime uttering a hideous yell, seized their horses, while some others whooped and yelled about the bush in search of them. All this time they were making their way by crawling among the mud and mire under the banks of the creek, and the bushes being thick and night coming on, they fortunately got off safely, owing solely to the approach of night; their horses, their traps and their blankets, however, were carried off by the Indians. The two men continuing their flight all night and all the next day, reached our camp in the middle of the second night, in a sad plight, without shoes on their feet, and their clothes torn to rags.

After hearing their story, no doubt remained on our minds as to the fate of the eight men; so I immediately roused the camp, and we were ready for a start by break of day. Leaving fifteen men to guard and conduct the camp after us, we, to the number of thirty-five, went in pursuit of the Piegans. On arriving at the place we found the nest, but the birds had flown; so we gave up the pursuit, and proceeded up Goddin's River, in search of our eight men. We had not proceeded far, before we had the good fortune to find our men safe. They were wholly ignorant of our anxiety and their narrow escape, for they had neither heard nor seen anything of the Piegans before we reached them. It appeared that while our men were creeping through the friendly creek, which so fortunately aided their escape, they passed, unseen, within ten yards of the very men whom they had been in search of; and who were at the time, unconscious of their dangerous situation, sleeping within half a mile of the Piegan camp.

We returned to meet the main party, and reached the camp long before dark. On this disagreeable trip I lost my spy-glass. The following day, I went and examined the Trois Têtons, so named from their appearance. These three little hills, standing in a group, are very conspicuous in the middle of an open plain, having hot springs at their base; but there is no cold water nearer than the south end of Goddin's River.

On starting the next day, we proposed following up Goddin's River all the way to its source, as it had never been either trapped or examined so far before. Following up this intention, we entered it at the extreme south point, where the two men fell on the Piegan war-party. Here that river enters the ground, and wholly disappears; and the reader will be better able to judge of the body of water that is thus absorbed, when we reach its source. Following up the river for about thirty miles to the head of the main stream, we found it thirty-five paces broad, the current strong, and running over a rocky bottom. At this place, the river is formed by three branches emptying into it, one from the north-west, another from the south-east, and a third from the south, all of nearly equal size, and descending from the surrounding heights. None of them were stocked with beaver, as we only got seven from eighty traps in one night, and few nights were better: in one of the traps we caught a deer, and I mention the circumstance on account of its novelty.

We ascended the south branch, which takes its rise in a ridge of mountains that divides river Goddin on the east from Salmon River on the west, and on the very top of which we encamped on the 16th of June. From this height I despatched two parties of discovery in different directions, one of which brought us accounts of having discovered a river with considerable appearances of beaver in it, on the south-west.

The weather until that day, during the month, was extremely cold; I should suppose not less than 15° below zero on Fahrenheit's thermometer: weather for blankets, mittens, and leather coats. The ice continued thick on the water; and since the 6th instant, we had almost a succession of stormy and boisterous weather; while on the 14th there fell nearly a foot of snow: here three of our horses died from cold and fatigue.

During our journey, the Iroquois had been plotting to abandon the main party and hunt apart by themselves; more especially since my quarrel with John Grey in the Valley of Troubles, and with Martin for disregarding the regulations of the camp, and neglecting his horses on Salmon River. At last, Old Pierre was drawn into the cabal, and came to me saying, that if I would but consent to their going off, they would do much better apart. I listened with patience to the old man's representation, but did not approve of it; I then refreshed his memory with Oskononton's tale of 1819, and put him in mind of their conduct at the river Skam-naugh, and their behaviour generally when left to themselves. He still persisted, saying that they would do well, and pledged himself for their conduct. I weighed the matter in my own mind, and at last consented, thinking it better to let them go and to supply their wants cheerfully, than to be dragging a disaffected party along with us; so I fitted them out, and we parted friends: but, to my surprise, Grey and Martin gave up the idea, saying they would still prefer remaining with the main party and running all chances. When we turned our backs on each other, Pierre and his party made for the south branch; while we steered our course south-west, to the place where the discovering party had met with beaver. On Pierre's departure we arranged matters so as to meet, on the first of October, at the Trois Têtons, near Goddin's River.

On descending from the height of land, we had to wind our steps over a prodigious elevation, the path leading along the edge of a precipice which overhung a foaming stream below; our way was full of rocks, and the place dangerous, and we had to make leather muffles for our horses' feet, as their hoofs were worn to the quick. On descending into the low bottom, we found the climate changed for the better; the snow was off the ground, the weather warm, and the new grass abundant.

Late in the evening we reached a stream, running through a deep valley, in the direction of south-west, called Rivière aux Malades; on its east bank we encamped, at a late hour.

In the vicinity of our present encampment were the finest appearances of beaver we had yet seen: in one place we counted 148 poplar trees cut down by that animal, in a space less than one hundred yards square. Our first lift was favourable, there being fifty-two beaver; in some of the traps there were eight feet, and in others seven toes, besides fifteen traps that missed altogether by the sudden rising and falling of the water: these mischances caused a total loss of thirty beaver in one night. It is always difficult and doubtful trapping where the water continues ebbing and flowing, and the chances of success are small; nevertheless, the place was promising, the weather fine, and grass good, so that our worn-out horses both fed and rested.

In the afternoon of the same day, we had to turn our attention to something else than catching beaver, for we perceived that a Piegan war-party were descending the mountain; the cry "Enemies, enemies," sounded in our ears, and the appearance and numbers of the party justified our apprehensions, we having only three men in camp at the time.

Our first care, on perceiving the enemy, was directed to the security of our horses, which were all scattered; for this purpose, one man with some of the women and boys set off to collect and bring them into camp; but the confusion and fear operated so powerfully on them, that they made but little progress—some drove them one way, some another, so that considerable time elapsed before they were got into a narrow point behind the camp.

While the people were securing the horses, the other man and myself lost no time in getting our gun pointed, the match lit, and the women and children out of the way. Whilst all this was going on, the uproar in the camp was great, and being placed along the woods, it presented an appearance of large numbers, which made the enemy still more doubtful of attacking us.

As soon as the Indians appeared on the heights, and long before we saw them, they were discovered by some of our hunters; who, communicating their fears to each other, scampered off in every direction to avoid the enemy and reach the camp; some throwing their beaver away, others their traps, while a few abandoned their horses, traps, beaver, and all, and took to their heels, hiding among the rocks. The Indians observing these movements, took us to be more numerous than we were, and this was no doubt the chief cause why they did not at once make a rush on our horses and carry them off: which they might easily have done.

The Indians had no sooner descended into the valley, where we were busied running after our horses, than they assembled in a group together, as if counselling for a moment; then extending themselves they made a demonstration of attack. The only reason we could assign for their not carrying it into effect, was their seeing so many of our people here and there on horseback making for the camp; or perhaps they had no ammunition, for they well knew that the whites were seldom short of that necessary article, and would have given them a warm reception. A party of them intercepted two of our men, John Grey and another Iroquois, and wrested a rifle from the hands of the latter, but they instantly restored it again, on perceiving some of our people in an opposite direction.

At last, the whole cavalcade advanced towards our camp in slow procession; but our people who had made for the woods coming fast in by ones and twos, soon relieved my anxiety, for by the time the Indians had got within a hundred yards of the camp, there were thirty men in it. I went out with a flag to meet the Indians, and motioned to them by signs not to approach the camp, but to sit down and smoke where they were; they did so, and in the meantime, giving them some tobacco and leaving Kouttanais Jacques to smoke with them, I returned to the camp, where we were ready to receive them.

When all our people arrived, and I found that the Indians were only ninety-two in number, I invited them to our camp, where they passed the night in smoking, dancing, and singing. All our people were under arms; at the same time, and as a further security, I ordered forty of their horses to be hobbled and put in with ours. I also secured their guns. On the following morning I invited them together, and questioned them as to their business in that quarter; asking them if there was not land enough in their own country for burying-ground, without coming to the Snake country to trouble the whites and frighten the natives.

The chief replied, "We have been on an embassy of peace to the Sho-sho-nes. When we left our own country, about three months ago, our party consisted of three hundred men; but not finding the principal Snake chiefs, we went off to try and fall in with our friends the Flatheads; and the main party returned home." On questioning them about the party who had seized the horses belonging to the two men at Goddin's River, they denied all knowledge of that affair. I then said, "You tried to rob one of my men of his gun yesterday!" For this the chief apologized, saying, "that they only wanted to look at it, as it was a custom among Piegans to handle and look at every strange gun they might see." But their excuse carried an air of falsehood on the face of it.

I strongly suspected that they were the very same party which had taken the two horses; and, moreover, that they were not a party on an embassy of peace to the Snakes, as the chief had stated, but a scouting expedition, on the look-out to take vengeance on the whites for the misfortunes that had happened to their people in the affray between them and McDonald's party last year: but the severe handling they had met with on that occasion, made the present party hesitate to attack so formidable a body of whites as we were; particularly since they had failed to surprise us.

Being harassed by the frequent appearance of such visitors, and this party being completely in our power, I intended giving them a fright, in return for many they had given us; I therefore seized on two of their horses and four of their guns, and told them I had done so, as a remuneration for the loss of our two horses and traps at Goddin's River—for I suspected them of taking them: "and besides," I said, "you give us too much trouble, and prevent us from hunting and trapping quietly in a country that you only frequent for mischief." This declaration humbled them: they made a thousand protestations of innocence; adding, that they were always friends to the whites; and although I did not believe a word they said, yet as there was a possibility of their being innocent, I restored the guns and horses, telling them to take care for the future.

After smoking and talking, I gave the chief five balls, powder, and a piece of tobacco; when, according to Indian custom, they exchanged some horses with our people, in token of friendship.

It was, however, amusing to witness their manoeuvring in going off; some went one way, some another, dispersing here and there in small parties until they had got to a considerable distance from our camp; then assembling in a crowd, they stood for some minutes, and marching off in a body, took to the mountains. For a little time we could not account for the manner of their departure, till some one observed that none of them had gone off in the direction that the big gun was pointed.

As soon as they were out of sight, taking some men with me we mounted our horses, and went to a neighbouring height a few miles off, to watch their motions; and there we saw them join the main party, which the chief had told us had gone home. As soon as they had joined together, they sat down, as we supposed to recount their adventures; after which, they all marched off, taking the direction of the Missouri.

On the next morning, the neighbourhood being clear of enemies, different parties were sent off in search of the traps and beaver that had been thrown away on the first appearance of the Piegans; all of which we had the good fortune to recover. At the place where the Indians had made their demonstration of attack, our people found six scalps stretched on circular bits of wood, and not yet dry!

The day after this bustle we took sixty beaver; but taking only eight at the next trial, we moved our camp down the river, and passed a bad night, from a storm of thunder and lightning.

From this place we advanced by slow marches, for five or six days, further down, till we reached a branch of the river coming in from the west, which we named West Fork; and although the appearances of beaver were favourable, yet our successes came far short of our expectation, owing chiefly to the unsettled state of the water. One morning, we found in our traps no less than forty-two feet and toes of beaver that had thus escaped!

As the generality of our readers may not be acquainted with the process of trapping beaver, we shall here explain the causes of our failure From the great heat during the day, the snow melted so fast that the water rushed down the mountains, causing a sudden rise in the river; but the cold nights as suddenly checking that rise, its fall became as rapid; hence the cause of our traps missing so frequently. When a trap is set for the purpose of catching beaver, it requires about six inches of water over it, and still deeper water near it; because the moment the animal is caught, which is invariably by the foot or toes, it plunges and drowns. But should the water rise for several inches higher, the animal can then swim over the trap without its feet touching it, and of course gets clear. On the contrary, should the water fall several inches lower, so that the animal, on being caught, could not, from the shallowness of the water, plunge and drown, it cuts its foot or toes off, and makes its escape; thus, in either case, a loss ensues. Our success had, however, during several nights past, averaged fifty-five beaver at a lift.

Here we found black and red currants ripe: we also saw the swallow, the blackbird, and wild pigeon for the first time this season. During the mornings and evenings the mosquitoes were very troublesome.

When we first fell on Rivière aux Malades, I had intended trapping it from end to end before leaving it; but being anxious to reach Reid's River early, and finding West Fork leading in that direction, I changed my first plan. Leaving, therefore, the river, to be taken on our way back in the autumn, we resolved at once on proceeding up West Fork. Having finished trapping at its entrance, we made preparations for advancing to Reid's River, in the hope of reaching it as high up as possible, in order to trap it downwards.

For this purpose I directed the main party, on raising camp one morning, to proceed in that direction; while I and four men with me were to remain until the return of part of our people who had gone out in search of their traps, when we were to have brought up the rear, and followed after. Turning, therefore, their backs on Rivière aux Malades, the main party continued their journey, whilst I and the men with me remained at the place appointed; which was the top of a high hill, not three miles from the encampment we had just left. From this height, however, the weather being very sultry, we descended a winding pass to the creek below, in order to refresh ourselves with a drink of cold water.

During our stay the men we had been waiting for had passed us unnoticed; but they had not got far before they met a courier from the main party a-head with the news that the Piegans were at the camp. Two of the men, therefore, wheeled round, and came back to look for us; but we had passed unseen, and they only discovered us on their return. On seeing them coming as it were from the camp we had left that morning, we very naturally supposed them to be the men we had been waiting for; but were a little uneasy at the gestures they were making to hurry our departure, and still more so on hearing them vociferously call out, "Enemies! Enemies at the camp!" and seeing them start off in the direction of the main party.

To extricate ourselves from our dangerous position and ascend the hill again was a work of some time: we, however, made all haste; the more especially as we took it for granted that the enemy spoken of were at the camp behind us. Ascending, therefore, to the top of the hill, in order to pursue our journey, and then seeing none of our people, we drove off at full speed, every now and then looking behind us. We had the distance of ten miles to go before we could join our companions, or get any support; three of our horses got completely knocked up, and falling down with the excessive heat under their loads, we, almost exhausted from fatigue, left them to their fate.

At last we came up with the party, and found to our surprise that, instead of running from the enemy, we had been running to meet them; for there they were before us. The Piegans all the time continued standing in a body, not far from our people, as if determined to oppose our progress further; or perhaps, rather hesitating whether to advance or retreat. Provoked by the loss of our horses and the continual annoyance of the enemy, I immediately served out ammunition to our people, and then told them we should go and put an end to this state of anxiety; so, leaving only the big gun and five men to guard the camp, forty-five of us mounted our horses and set off, with the full determination of having a brush with the Piegans. When we were within one hundred yards of the party, who were all on foot, two of them, with a kind of flag, advanced to meet us; we made signs for them to keep off; they, however, continued advancing. We then presented our guns at them, though I gave strict orders not to fire; but they still unflinchingly advanced: so we resolved to wait their arrival, and see what they had got to say.

The principal man, on reaching us, presented me with his flag; then, clasping my horse's neck in his arms, he began to crouch in a supplicating manner. I gave him a push off with the butt-end of my gun, which I was immediately sorry for; he nevertheless still held fast hold of my horse by the neck. We then dismounted, and entered into a parley with them. They proved to be Piegans, and 110 strong, but badly armed; having only twenty-three guns, and scarcely a load of ammunition; but they had quivers well filled with arrows.

Seeing there was no appearance of coming to blows, I invited the two Indians to our camp, intimating to them that the others should remain where they were. On reaching the camp, I despatched some men for the horses that we had abandoned on the road; two of which, together with the property, were recovered, but the third had died.

I then questioned the Indians, as we had done the party before, as to their business in that quarter; for we had flattered ourselves that we should have been, at all events, clear of both Piegans and Blackfeet in that direction. On putting the question, the chief smiling said, "We are not horse-thieves; for if we had been so inclined, we might have easily taken yours, as we were among them two nights ago. Two of my people entered your camp at night; and as a proof of what I say, one of them took a piece of deer's meat which was roasting at a fire, and stuck it on a pole at one end of your camp, and rubbed two spots of red paint on a riding-saddle at one of the tent-doors. We are, therefore, not looking for horses, nor wishing to injure the whites; but have come in search of sixteen of our relations, who came to this quarter last year, and have not been heard of since: that is our business at present."

The circumstances mentioned by the chief, respecting the roasted venison and riding-saddle, were correct. We had noticed both, but never thought that they had been the work of Indians; and it was certainly a broad hint for us to guard the camp better another time. We then questioned the chief as to the affair at Goddin's River, and gave him an account of the party we had seen at our first encampment on Rivière aux Malades; but he denied all knowledge of either.

For the fellow's candour and honesty I gave him ten balls and powder, a piece of tobacco and a knife, and shaking hands with them, we parted good friends.

From Piegan Encampment, a name we bestowed on this place, we continued our journey onwards from the head of West Fork, over a rugged country, in search of Reid's River; and although scarcely thirty miles distant, it took us six long summer days to accomplish it. During one of those days, we travelled ten hours before we made three miles: never did man or beast pass through a country more forbidding or hazardous.

The rugged and rocky paths had worn our horses' hoofs to the quick, and we not unfrequently stood undecided and hopeless of success. However, after immense labour, toil, and hardship, we reached the river. Arriving on its rocky banks, and looking, as it were, over a mighty precipice, into the gulf below, we were struck with admiration at the roaring cataract forcing its way between chasms and huge rocks over a bed it had been deepening for centuries. But although we had reached the river, we had still little hope of making our way along its precipitous bank: we journeyed on, however, sometimes in sight of it, and at other times miles from it, until we had made the distance of 116 miles; which took us twelve days, during which time we only caught fifty-one beaver.

But bad roads were not the only obstacles we had to overcome: we had starvation to contend with; for animals of the chase, of every kind, as well as beaver, were scarce, and our hunters often returned to camp more hungry and dissatisfied than they left it. At this stage of our journey the people began to murmur greatly against the roads and want of provisions—evils we could neither foresee nor prevent.

I now found that, although I had got rid of most of the Iroquois, I had not got rid of troubles; for there remained John Grey and Martin, who were enough to poison the minds of the rest. I, therefore, assembled all hands together, and told them that we had met with nothing but what we might have expected; that as we had proceeded so far in that direction, I was determined to proceed further and make the best of it, to see its good as well as its bad side; that in the nature of things we must soon get to a better part of the country than this in which we had been involved for some time past; that a few days' perseverance might bring us relief, as we should soon get to the Snakes in the direction we were pursuing; but that if a week did not procure us the relief they desired, I would be prepared to meet their views. They all consented, and order was again restored; but had they had plenty of ammunition at the time, they would have followed their own inclinations.

We had for some time past been anxiously looking for some of the Snakes, from whom we might get information respecting the roads and country through which we had to pass; we had come to some places where they had been encamped, but they always got the start of us, and having fled to the rocks, eluded our search. But as we were pondering over our difficulties, two wretched beings were found among the rocks. They proved to be the sole remnant of a small band of the Bannatee tribe, consisting of eighteen persons, whom, according to their own account, the Piegan party we had seen at West Fork had fallen upon, killing every man, woman, and child, excepting only the two men before us. These poor creatures were almost unintelligible through fear; we nevertheless comprehended their misfortunes. They were mourning, had cut their hair, and were apparently destitute of food and raiment. We could scarcely get any information from them, but understood the roads were impassable. We gave them a few trifles, and let them go back to their strongholds again.

Not an hour after the two Bannatees had gone off, a party whom I had sent out on discovery arrived at the camp with two men and a woman, whom they had surprised and brought by *force*; but the captives were so frightened that neither kindness nor presents could make them speak, or look upon us as friends. So we had to let them go as they came; and we remained just as ignorant as we were before, as to the roads and country.

## CHAPTER XII.

A calm after a storm—Gloomy aspect—Cheering prospects—Plenty, and smiling countenances—Pee-eye-em and suite—His manner—Cayouse plenipotentiaries—The peace—A ride round the great Snake camp—The council—Ceremony of smoking—More honour than comfort—A suspicious night—Peace concluded—[illegible] Barter with the Snakes—The three rivers described—Beaver—Division of the party—Horse-racing—An Iroquois outwitted—The trick—Indians at home—Awkward position of the whites—Ama-ketsa—The crafty chief—Encamp in a wrong place—Excursion round the camp—Salmon—Wararereekas—Their character—The trap quarrel—Conduct of the whites—Seize ten of the Snake horses—Rogues surprised—Stratagem—A camp cleared—The pipe stem—Stolen traps restored—Return of good feelings—Raise camp—Waterfalls—Salmon-fishery—News of the Iroquois—Point Turnagain—Comparison of distances—Natural bridge—Subterraneous river—Hot and cold springs—Valley of lightning—Thunder—Rivière aux Malades—Poisonous beaver—A horse drowned—Snake surprised—[illegible] in winter—Hazardous travelling—Mount Simpson—The Governor's punch-bowl—Source of Salmon River—Conjectures—The wounded pheasant—Bear River—A bear hunt—The bear and the beaver—The last shift—A horse drowned—Hard work and little progress—Canoe Point again—Disabled horses—Narrow escape—A man died—Buffalo plenty—The wounded bull—Habits of the buffalo—Iroquois arrive—Their story—Their conduct—American trappers.

NOTWITHSTANDING that we had seen some of the Snakes, as we so much desired, we still remained as ignorant of the country as ever. Following up the plan we were pursuing, we left the encampment, and proceeded down Reid's River. At the end of three days' toil we got clear out of the mountains, and into a highly picturesque and open country, well furnished with animals of the chace. Our first lift of beaver was sixty-four, a number considered favourable in comparison with what we had been doing for some time past. Added to this cheering prospect, six elks and seventeen small deer coming into camp at once, filled a starving and dissatisfied people with abundance. And now, for the first time during the last twenty-five days, I witnessed a smile of content throughout the camp.

The lower part of Reid's River furnishing us with plenty of beaver and other animals, raised once more a hope of making good hunts; and, for a time, my people were cheerful, industrious, and obedient. Here we had a visit from Pee-eye-em, one of the principal personages of the country, accompanied by a retinue of forty warriors, all armed with guns and mounted on horseback. They had a flag, the one given them by M'Kenzie, and arrived in state. This chief was the great sachem, so frequently and favourably mentioned by our friends on former expeditions; always remarkable for size, he had certainly not diminished in his proportions; he was dull and heavy in his manner, never smiled, and spoke slowly, in a low tone of voice. His answers were generally a nod of the head; leaving us often to guess whether he meant an affirmative or a negative. Both himself and his escort were as fine a set of athletic men as I had ever seen in the country.

Pee-eye-em appeared pleased to see the whites again on his lands, and often inquired with great eagerness about Mr. M'Kenzie. I offered the chief some tobacco; but, preferring his own, he declined taking ours. After remaining for some time with us, he told me that his camp, or the Sherry-dikas, was far off, and that he had come a journey of ten days to visit his friend Ama-ketsa, the principal War-are-reeka chief; whose camp, he said, was only a few miles distant: this was the great Snake camp mentioned to us by the Piegan chief while at West Fork. Pee-eye-em then informed me that while he was at Ama-ketsa's camp, a party of the Cayouse tribe from Fort Nez Percés had arrived there on a mission of peace; and that, hearing o the whites being in the neighbourhood, he had come to invite me to their council, in order to see the peace ratified.

Putting my people in a secure place, and taking ten men with me, and also the Indian flag, I accompanied Pee-eye-em and his followers to the War-are-reeka camp; where we all arrived at dusk, after a hard ride of ten miles. Here I met my Cayouse friends, who were no less rejoiced to see me than I was to see them in a strange country.

On the whole, nothing could possibly have happened better, than that the person who had been at the beginning of the peace, and instrumental in bringing it about, should have arrived so seasonably to witness its conclusion. The business was introduced at once. Each spoke in his turn, and I among the rest. When we had concluded, Pee-eye-em mounted his horse, with a singularly-painted robe thrown round him, and rode about for some time haranguing the people; and every now and then, the cry Ho! ho!! ho!!! was uttered by the surrounding multitude by way of confirmation. Then a number of the elderly men, collecting in a group, held consultation; when they all uttered in a loud voice and drawling tone the same cry, which appeared to convey the general consent; it only wanted the ceremony of a council and smoking to conclude the business.

The chief's lodge was quickly put in order, with a fire in the centre, when the ceremony of ratifying the peace, according to Indian form, commenced. The two Cayouse plenipotentiaries were placed in the back part of the tent by Pee-eye-em, and I next to them; eighteen Snake dignitaries next entered and squatted themselves down on each side of us. Lastly, Pee-eye-em sat opposite to us, with his back to the door, having Ama-ketsa on his right and another chief on his left; apparently with the intention of keeping out all intruders, and preventing any one from either going out or coming in during the solemn sitting. This completed the diplomatic circle. After which a silence ensued for some time.

The great medicine bag was then opened and the decorated pipe of peace taken out of it; the pipe was then filled, with the usual formality, by Pee-eye-em, who immediately afterwards took a handful or two of sand with which he covered a small hole by the fireside; then smoothing it over, he made two small holes with his finger in the sand, large enough to hold a goose's egg, one on each side. This done, he then took out of the medicine bag a small piece of wood shaped like a sugar tongs, with which he took up a piece of burning horse-dung and laid it in the hole of sand to his left; resting the bowl of his pipe in the hole to the right, and holding the stem of his pipe all the time in his left hand. He then took up the same piece of wood or tongs, and with it took the burning piece of horse-dung out of the hole to the left and laid it upon his pipe; which was no sooner lighted, than Pee-eye-em taking up the pipe with both hands, drew three whiffs, allowing none of the smoke to escape, but swallowing the whole of it; then taking the pipe from his mouth, he held it vertically each time that he smoked, blowing the cloud out of his mouth on to the stem: this he did three successive times, and each time he uttered a short prayer, as if invoking a blessing.

Then holding the pipe horizontally, and pointing to the east, he drew three whiffs, blowing the smoke on to the stem as before; then turning it to the west, next to the south, and lastly to the north, he did the same: always observing to repeat the short prayer, when he turned the pipe. Lastly, pointing the pipe to the ground, he drew three whiffs, blowing the smoke, as before, on to the stem; signifying that the animosities of war might be for ever after buried beneath the earth. But in all this ceremony, Pee-eye-em did not once, as is generally customary among Indians, hold the pipe to, or blow the smoke, either to the sun or the firmament.

All this time Pee-eye-em was sitting on his hams; but now rising up, and turning the pipe stem, he presented it to one of the Cayouses, telling him to touch it with his mouth but not to exhale any smoke; the Cayouse did so: then withdrawing the pipe for a moment, he presented it to him a second time, with the same positive injunction, which the Cayouse observed. The caution was no doubt intended to impress upon the Cayouse the duty of reflecting on the responsibility of what he was going to do; for smoking with Indians on such occasions is the same as an oath with us: then putting it to his mouth the third time, the chief said, "You may smoke now;" adding, after he had drawn a few whiffs, "we are now brothers."

The Cayouse after smoking, handed me the pipe, but without any ceremony. The smoking then went round and round the circle, with no other formality than that Pee-eye-em always filled the pipe and lighted it himself, with the same tongs as before. The fire was always a piece of horse-dung, till the ceremony on the part of Pee-eye-em was gone through.

The lodge during this time was like an oven, so that I got up to go out and get a little fresh air; but Pee-eye-em shook his head, and made signs for me to sit down again. I then asked for a drink of water; but Pee-eye-em giving another shake of the head, I had to sit down and compose myself: there we sat, half roasted, half stifled, thirsty, and uncomfortable, until long after midnight; when Pee-eye-em getting up and opening the door went out; we all followed, and the ceremony ended.

I expected that the chief would have invited me and the Cayouses to supper and to pass the night in his tent; but supperless and houseless we had to pass the night in the open air, in a camp stinking with rotten fish, and pestered with snarling dogs: the night being warm, the stench was horrible. Next morning, seeing no signs of anything to eat, I purchased two fine fresh salmon, which my men cooked, and on which we made a hearty breakfast. We then prepared to return to our camp, and I invited the Cayouse chiefs to accompany us; but just as we were mounting our horses, Pee-eye-em, with his flag in his hand, and a retinue of forty followers, joined and accompanied us back to our camp. Comparing things, I thought that there was more honour than comfort in the Snake camp.

From the solemnity observed, it might have been expected that we were all in earnest; but so changeable and treacherous are savages, that I was apprehensive the Cayouse envoys would not get back safely; I therefore invited them to our camp, promising them an escort to convey them out of danger: we learned afterwards that they returned to their own people in safety.

The peace having been occasionally progressing for the last seven years, I now, for the first time, began to entertain hopes that it might, after all, be lasting. The hostile feelings had of late much diminished, otherwise the Cayouses would never have ventured so far, and in such small numbers, into the heart of their enemy's country. The Snakes had also, as we have already noticed, been at the Nez Percés camp, and returned with a favourable impression.

We have noticed that Pee-eye-em accompanied us to our camp, where, having remained for the greater part of two days, he returned home; on which occasion, I presented him with a hundred balls, and powder, and some few trifles, for which he appeared very thankful. We parted with regret; for the more I knew of him the better I liked him. He was sincere, well-disposed, and much attached to the whites. From this time forward, the Snakes became constant visitors at our camp;

but were not always so friendly as I could have wished. We, however, occasionally bought a few salmon from them, so that they might become possessed of some useful and necessary articles; but especially to keep up a good understanding with them. A needle was given for a salmon, an awl for ten, and a knife for fifty! and they could have enriched themselves at that *rate*, had we been able to encourage the trade.

After our Snake visitors had left us, we continued our trapping down Reid's River with good success, taking from seventy to eighty beaver every morning until we reached its mouth; a distance from where we fell on it of one hundred and seventy miles. Remaining a few days on the main Snake River, we shaped our course north-west for sixty-four miles, till we fell on river Pagette or middle river; up which stream we proceeded to its source, a distance of one hundred and ten miles; then crossing over in a course nearly north, for some thirty miles, we fell on river Wuzer, down which we hunted until, at the distance of fifty miles, we again reached the main river. We found large numbers of beaver; but for want of canoes could do nothing. We then proceeded in a southerly direction till we made the great Snake camp of Ama-ketsa, where we had concluded the treaty of peace. During our survey of all these rivers, including that of Rivière aux Malades, we caught 1855 beaver.

Here let us take a retrospective view of a circumstance which occurred on leaving river Wuser. As we were about to proceed to where the Snakes were numerous, I issued a certain quantity of ammunition to the hunters; cautioning them at the same time not to trade any of that essential article with the natives, nor to waste it, as our safety depended on it; and our stock was getting lower every day. The moment, however, the Iroquois and Half-breeds found themselves in possession of a sufficient supply, the plotting was revived; and on the very day we turned our backs on river Wuser, they turned their backs on us: I only discovered their defection on reaching our encampment at night. John Grey, Martin, and ten others had lagged behind, with the intention of taking a different road to the one we had taken, and we were then too far apart to overtake them; so we continued on, in the hope that they might join us in a day or two.

On the fifth day, two of them with an Indian guide arrived at our camp with the news that the party had got into trouble with the Snakes; which did not surprise me. Our people had been exchanging horses, running races, and wrangling with the natives. Martin and a Snake having betted on their horses, the former lost the wager, when a bystander seeing Martin dissatisfied, went up to him, saying, "You do not know how to ride your horse to advantage; give him to me, and I will beat the Snake, and get back your ammunition again." Pleased at the proposal, Martin was simple enough to put his horse into the Indian's hands; when off started both the Snakes. Martin waited in vain; neither Snake nor horse ever returned. So, in addition to his ammunition, he lost his horse.

After this trick, our people and the Snakes quarrelled; when the latter, getting displeased, drove off four of their horses in broad daylight. To revenge this act, six of the whites, mounting their best horses, pursued; in order to get a-head and intercept the thieves at a narrow place where they had to pass, they took a short cut and got there first; then dismounting, they tied their horses at the edge of the woods; the men concealing themselves in the bush. The Indians not coming up at the time expected, the whites thought they might have taken another road; so they went further into the bush and set about cooking something for themselves before returning to camp, at the same time loosing their horses a little to feed. While they were thus employed, the Indians arrived, and seeing the horses, gave two or three yelps; the horses took fright and joined the other four, and the Indians drove them all before them; leaving their pursuers to return home on foot, with their saddles on their backs!

This was the story which the two men brought us, and they very pressingly asked for assistance. Thus separated, one half of us involved in a quarrel with the natives, and the other half in the vicinity of a formidable camp, requiring all our united strength, I was for a moment at a loss what to do: to have sent a party back to their assistance, would have been exposing ourselves; to have left them without support, would have been sacrificing them. As there was little time for hesitation, I resolved at once on applying to our friend Pee-eye-em; but on reaching the Indian camp, I was mortified to find that Pee-eye-em had gone off to join his own people at a distance.

I had then nothing left but to apply to Ama-ketsa, the next in power; but he raised many objections, and said the guilty Indians were Bannatees, over whom he had no control. The temptation of a new gun, however, made the wily chief alter his tone, and he then undertook the mission: he recovered eight of the ten stolen horses, and arrived at our camp on the fourth day after his departure, bringing the whole party along with him. He had, however, managed, through cunning and under various pretences, to get from the Iroquois the remainder of their ammunition; but I had to overlook the sacrifice, and was contented to see us all together once more.

On Ama-ketsa's arrival with the party, he appeared very pleased and self-important; spoke in a laudatory strain of himself and the War-are-reekas generally, and dwelt particularly on their honesty and friendly disposition towards the whites; and thought we never could give him enough for the services he had rendered us. When I reproached my people for their conduct, the fault was shifted from one to another, and the Snakes blamed for all. We lost eight days' time, besides the risk we ran of more serious evils. Ama-ketsa strongly urged us to put up for a few days by the side of his camp; and although I did not like the situation, as much on account of the thoughtlessness of my own people, as from any apprehension of the Indians; yet, willing to show him a favour after the kind services he had done us, I complied with his request. So we encamped in a strong position, three-fourths surrounded by a bend of the river, having only our front to guard at the northern extremity of the great Snake camp.

We had no sooner got our camp in order than Ama-ketsa invited me to accompany him round the Indian camp; and in doing so, we had a train of at least five hundred followers! From the spot where we set out to the other end, was a distance of nearly five miles, and their tents were closely pitched on both sides of the river. I estimated the number of tents at about nine hundred of every description; and allowing only five persons to each, which was below the real number, we should have four thousand five hundred souls; and there might have been about half that number of horses about the place. There appeared to be but few armed with guns, in proportion to the number armed with bows and arrows.

This being the salmon season, Indians were flocking in from all quarters, and the quantity of salmon taken about this place alone, though this was not the great fish rendezvous, must have been immense: not less, perhaps, than twenty thousand daily!

Ama-ketsa's camp was ill-constructed for defence, and much exposed, had an enemy assailed it; but the division of labour was such, that every person seemed to be well occupied. Horse-racing, foot-racing, gambling, fishing, camp-making, wood-gathering, water-carrying, swimming, smoking, eating, sporting, and playing, went on in different parts of the Indian camp. The Snakes are not a lazy people; their camp was, however, very dirty, as all fish camps are. All classes we saw, with the exception of a few persons, were meanly clad, even for Indians; and very few of the men, and scarcely any women, were painted—a practice so prevalent among other tribes. But they were plump, oily, and sleek; with countenances rather dull than expressive; and appeared sociable and friendly among themselves.

During our ramble we had several opportunities of seeing and examining their native tobacco in its manufactured state. I purchased a gallon of it for a scalping knife; but I did not much like it; though as a substitute for tobacco, it is better than nothing. The natives use it from habit; but Ama-ketsa and several others smoked ours. We mixed with the people, stood and talked with them, and amused ourselves in examining their manner of doing their work; but not one of them ever said to us, "Will you eat!" We likewise saw them make their cricket and grasshopper broth, which appeared to me abominable and disgusting. We returned home in the evening very hungry, and with no favourable opinion of Snake hospitality.

We saw very few beaver among them; but at some distance from their camp, appearances were promising, so that my people were more anxious than prudent the following day, to set their traps. I had forbid them to do so, in order to avoid difficulties with the natives; but the chief assuring us that there would not be the least danger of the Indians either stealing or touching them, a few more traps were put in the water, and their success encouraged others to try their fortune. The first and second nights not one of the traps was touched; but on a subsequent trial no fewer than twelve were stolen: this sudden check to our proceedings opened our eyes to the character of the natives, and left us to judge how far their character was in accordance with the account the honest chief had given us. I spoke to Ama-ketsa on the subject, with the view of having our traps restored. The chief smiled, and made light of the matter; the other Indians taunted and jeered our people for making inquiries after their traps.

Soon after this discovery, I had to chastise one of them for attempting to steal a piece of rope out of our camp. These little grievances we winked at for some time, trying to check them gently, in order to keep on good terms with Ama-ketsa and his people; but this conciliatory plan only encouraged them to assume a still greater degree of boldness. Thus matters went on until one evening a fellow picked up a bundle, and refusing to deliver it up, it was taken from him by force; he strung his bow, and threatened the man who had taken it from him, but was wise enough not to shoot.

On observing the daring aspect and conduct of the Indians, I assembled all my people together, and stated to them that I had known the character of these Indians for many years past, and that from their insolent behaviour of late it behoved us to keep a strict and vigilant eye on them; that it appeared evident to me they were seeking to intimidate us, and if they once thought they could succeed, they would rob us; and then they might attempt something else; but before they had gone too far, we must let them know that they could not encroach on our property with impunity. That united we were strong, and might teach them to respect us; whereas on the contrary, if we allowed them to take the footing they were assuming, we might regret having carried our forbearance too far. Twelve of our friends had already fallen victims to their barbarity; and what they had once done, they might attempt again, since they had stolen our traps, and had shown a disposition to set us at defiance!

I concluded by saying, we will go and seize just so many of their horses as they have taken of our traps, and keep them as pledges until they restore us our property: this will show them that we are not afraid of them." But my people demurred to this proposition: some said the Indians were too numerous; others, that we should all get killed. The Iroquois objected, because it would put an end to their traffic with the Indians; while those who had lost their traps were, like myself, anxious to get them back, and to show that we were not to be trifled with. Some, however, called out, "We will go and take their horses, and after that fight them." I told them that we had not come on their lands to fight them, but to treat them kindly; yet in doing so, we must not allow the Indians to trample upon us. "Follow my advice," I said, "and there will be no fighting in the matter: make a bold stand in defence of our rights."

I then warned my men, that if any person exceeded his orders, he should be punished. At last, the whole party were convinced of the necessity of taking a decisive step to check the insolent tone of the Indians, and to pave the way for our getting away without loss or disgrace.

Arming ourselves, therefore, to the number of thirty-five, we sallied forth, seized, bridled, and brought into our camp ten of their horses; we then put everything in the best order for defence, knowing that this step would bring the matter to an issue. Two of the Indians being at our camp at the time, we counted out one hundred bullets before them, and poured them into our big gun in their presence, so that they might report the circumstance when they got to the Indian camp; we then sent them off with a message, that as soon as the Indians delivered up our traps, we would deliver up their horses.

When the two Indians had returned with the message to their camp, I instructed my people to have their arms in readiness, in such a position that each man could have his eye upon his gun, and could lay hold of it at a moment's warning; but to appear as careless as if nothing was expected. That, if the Indians did come, as they certainly would, to claim their horses, and insisted on taking them, I would reason the matter with them; and when that failed, I would give the most forward of them a blow with my pipe stem, which was to be the signal for my people to act. The moment, therefore, the signal was given, the men were to shout, according to Indian custom, raise, and make a demonstration with their arms; but were not to fire, until I had first set the example. During this time there was a great stir in the Indian camp; people were observed running to and fro, and we awaited the result with anxiety.

Not long after, we saw a procession of some fifty or sixty persons, all on foot and unarmed, advancing in a very orderly manner towards our camp; in front of which was placed our big gun, well loaded, pointed, and the match lit. My men were in the rear, whistling, singing, and apparently indifferent. On the Indians coming up to me and another man, who stood in front to receive them near to where the horses were tied, I drew a line of privilege, and made signs for them not to pass it. They, however, looked very angry, and observed the line with reluctance, so that I had to beckon to them several times before I was obeyed, or could make them understand. At last they made a sort of irregular halt.

I then made signs for the Indians to sit down; but they shook their heads. I asked where was Ama-ketsa; but got no satisfactory reply. One of the fellows immediately introduced the subject of the horses, in very fierce and insolent language; I however, to pacify him, and make friends, spoke kindly to them, and began to reason the matter, and explain it to them as well as I could; but the fellow already noticed, being more forward and daring than the rest, sneered at my argument, and at once laid hold of one of the horses by the halter, and endeavoured to take it away without further ceremony. I laid hold of the halter, in order to prevent him, and the fellow every now and then gave a tug to get the halter out of my hand; the others kept urging him on, and they were the more encouraged, seeing my people did not interfere; the latter were, however, on the alert, waiting impatiently for the signal, without the Indians being in the least aware of it. Beginning to get a little out of humour, I made signs to the Indians, that if he did not let go, I would knock him down; but, prompted no doubt by the strong party that backed him, and seeing no one with me, he disregarded my threat by giving another tug at the halter. I then struck him smartly on the side of the head with my pipe stem, and sent him reeling back among his companions; upon which my men sprang up, seized their arms, and gave a loud shout! The sudden act, with the terror conveyed by the cocking of so many guns, so surprised the Indians, that they lost all presence of mind; throwing their robes, garments, and all from them, they plunged headlong into the river, and swam with the current till out of danger, every now and then popping up their heads and diving again, like so many wild fowl! In less than a minute's time, there was not a soul of the embassy to be seen about our camp! Never was anything more decisive.

It may be satisfactory to the reader to know what kind of pipe stem it was that one could strike a heavy blow with. The pipe-bowls generally used, both by Indians and Indian traders, are made of stone, and are large and heavy; the stems resemble a walking-stick more than anything else, and they are generally of ash, and from two-and-a-half to three feet long.

We had intended removing camp the same day; but after what had happened, I thought it better to pass another day where we were, in order to give the Snakes as well as ourselves an opportunity of making up matters. Not a soul, however, came near us all that day afterwards, and we were at a loss to find out what was going on in the Snake camp. I therefore got about twenty of my men mounted on horseback, to take a turn round, in order to observe the movements of the Indians; but they having brought me word that the women were all employed in their usual duties, I felt satisfied.

During the following day, ten persons were observed making for our camp, who, on arrival, spread out a buffalo robe, on which was laid all our stolen traps! some whole, some broken into several pieces, which they had been flattening for knives; the whole rendered almost useless to us. Ama-ketsa, who had not been present at the affray of the preceding day, accompanied this party, and made a long and apparently earnest apology for the loss of our traps, and the misunderstanding that ensued; but he did not forget to exculpate his own people from all blame, laying the odium of the whole affair on the Bannatees. We knew the contrary: the War-are-ree-kas were the guilty parties, and perhaps Ama-ketsa himself was not altogether innocent; at least, some of his people said so. We, however, accepted the apology, and the traps, as they were; and delivering up all the horses, treated the chief with due honours, satisfied that the business ended so well.

The chief had no sooner returned to his camp with the horses, than a brisk trade was opened; the

Indians, men, women, and children, coming to us with as much confidence as if nothing had happened. On the next morning, while we were preparing to start, one of my men fell from his horse and broke his thigh; we, however, got it so set, as not to prevent our removal. Although everything wore the appearance of peace, yet I thought it necessary to take precautions, in order to avoid any trouble with the natives in passing their camp. I therefore appointed ten men mounted on horseback to go before, the camp followed in order after, while myself and twenty men brought up the rear; and all was peace and good order.

From the great Snake camp our course lay south, I purposing to take a sweep round the Snake Falls, with the view of trapping beaver and trying to get some accounts of our ten Iroquois. Fifty-seven beaver taken the first night, rewarded the toil of a long day's journey. At the Falls the concourse of natives resembled that at the Columbia Narrows (*Dalles des morts*) at this season of the year; but I was taught by our experience at Ama-ketsa's camp, not to put up near them; so we passed on. While at the Falls, the Indians told me that they had seen the Iroquois about a month before, and gave us to understand that they had got into difficulties with the Snakes, and were spending more time in hunting after women, than beaver.

From the Falls we continued our course south-east for about seventy miles, until we had reached the south end of a long range of high lands, which we called Point Turnagain; there we encamped on the 24th of August. This was the extent of our journey to the south: from that point we turned our faces towards home. Up to this date, we had travelled, since leaving the Flatheads, including trapping excursions apart from our regular journeys, 1110 miles; scouting excursions, watching our enemies, 490 miles; reconnoitring excursions for beaver, for practicable passes, and in search of new trapping ground, 530 miles; in addition to our daily journeys, which amounted to 1320 miles: making in the aggregate not less than 3450 miles!

From the mouth of river Wuzer, where we turned from the west to the south, the distance to Fort Nez Percés is not more than one hundred and eighty miles due west: a distance which might be travelled with horses in a week; and yet we had been travelling by the Spokane and Flathead road for upwards of seven months! At this stage of our journey, we had lost by casualties, chiefly from bad roads and severe weather, eighteen of our horses, and twenty-two of our steel traps; and had taken, exclusive of the Iroquois, 3880 beaver. Anticipating, therefore, a successful hunt from the Iroquois party, our prospects were still fair. From Point Turnagain, we took a wide range, and with tolerable success, until we again fell on Rivière aux Malades, according to our original plan.

On our way thither we passed over one of those natural bridges so frequently noticed on former trips, the span of which was about thirty feet, the height twelve feet; and it appeared to be but one solid rock, through which the water had forced a passage, for under it passed a good stream, which flowed over a gravelly bottom. Following down the current, the water all of a sudden disappeared, making its way under ground, similar to the river Goddin: no water was then to be seen. We passed and repassed seven times over the ground, but saw nothing for a mile; when the water as suddenly burst out again, and flowed in a strong current, sufficiently deep to have carried a loaded boat on it! After following it for some distance, it disappeared; and we, taking another direction, saw it no more. In the last opening, we shot an otter and two musk rats. This subterraneous river flowed through one of the most delightful valleys I had ever seen, skirted on each side by gentle rising ranges of high lands, divided transversely between these ranges by descending rivulets, whose banks were lined with rows of bushes, as if planted by the hand of man. As we journeyed along, we passed several cold and hot springs. This enchanting vale I named the Garden of the Snake Country. It surpassed, both in beauty and fertility, the valley of the Wallamitte.

While journeying through this beautiful vale, which is some thirty miles in length, we were overtaken by a heavy deluge of rain (accompanied by the most fearful thunder and lightning), which drenched us to the skin, before we could get encamped: after which, having made a large fire out of doors, and while standing round it to dry ourselves, a flash of lightning passed as it were through the flame and almost blinded us, while the loud peal of thunder, instantaneously following, struck several of the party dumb for a moment. Three of the men were thrown down upon the ground, others upon their knees, myself and another man were forced out of the position in which we stood, to a distance of three or four feet. The whole camp remained for some time speechless. Within a short distance of us, the lightning struck a tree, setting it on fire. We had frequently this season been visited by heavy thunder, and much lightning is attracted to this mountainous quarter; but none of us had ever seen anything so terrific as in this place. We therefore named it the Valley of Lightning!

We now turn our attention to Rivière aux Malades. On reaching that stream we found beaver in considerable numbers: the first lift yielded forty-nine. The prospect before us was encouraging; but here a misfortune clouded our hopes, and made beaver a secondary consideration. After breakfast the second morning, a number of the people were taken ill; and the sickness becoming general throughout the camp, it struck me that there must have been something poisonous in our food or water. Not being able to discover anything, I began to inquire more particularly what each person had eaten that morning, and found that all those who had breakfasted on the fresh beaver taken out of the river were affected, whilst those who had eaten other food remained in good health.

Two hours had not elapsed before thirty-seven persons were seized with gripings and laid up. The sickness first showed itself in a pain about the kidneys, then in the stomach, and afterwards in the back of the neck and all the nerves; and at length the whole system became affected. The sufferers were almost speechless and motionless; having scarcely the power to stir, yet suffering great pain, with considerable froth about the mouth. I was seriously alarmed, for we had no medicine of any kind in our camp, nor scarcely time to have used it; so rapidly was the sickness increasing, that almost every soul in the camp, in the space of a few hours, was either affected with the disease, or panic-struck with fear t

The first thing I applied was gunpowder: throwing, therefore, a handful or two of it into a dish of warm water, and mixing it up, I made them drink strong doses of it; but it had little effect. I then tried a kettle of fat broth, mixed up and boiled with a handful or two of pepper which some of the people happened to have. I made them drink of that freely; and whether it was the fat or the pepper, I know not, but it soon gave relief. Some were only sick for part of the day; but others, owing perhaps to the quantity that they had eaten, were several days before they got over it; and some of them felt the effects of it for a month afterwards.

We then examined the flesh of the beaver, and found it much whiter and softer, and, the people who had eaten of it said, sweeter to the taste than the flesh of beaver generally. As there was no wood about the banks of the river, we supposed these animals must have lived on some root of a poisonous quality, which, although not strong enough to destroy them, yet was sufficiently deleterious to injure us: from this it was that I named this stream Rivière aux Malades.

Having trapped up the river to the place where we had left it, we then crossed over in order to trap some creeks in the mountains: here some of the horses had to swim, and several persons had a narrow escape of being drowned. On mustering on the opposite bank, I perceived at a considerable distance a Snake among the bushes, as if in the act of hunting for ground squirrels: beckoning to some of my people who were already mounted, and pointing to the individual, we set off at full speed to cut between him and the rocks, that we might get hold of him in order to learn something of the country we had to pass through. So intent was he on his business, that we were almost on him before he observed our approach; but the moment he saw us, he bent his bow, taking us for enemies.

Regardless of his bow and himself, we rushed in and laid hold of him; and on our dismounting from our horses, the poor creature let his bow and arrows fall to the ground, and stood speechless, and almost frightened to death.

We, however, mounted him behind one of the men, and carried him to our camp, where we treated him with every kindness, and at last, by means of our man Hackana, got him to speak a little. I ordered some beaver flesh to be set before him, putting some of the white or poisonous into one dish, and some of the good into another, purposely, to see if he knew the difference; but the two dishes were no sooner set before him, than he gave us to understand that the Indians invariably roast, but never boil, the white kind; telling us by signs, that it was bad, unless roasted.

We then entered at some length with our captive on the subject of their living, and how the Bannatees generally pass the winter; when he observed,—"We never want for plenty to eat, at all seasons. We often suffer from cold, but never from hunger. Our winter houses are always built among the rocks, and in the woods; and when the snows are deep, we kill as many deer as we please with our knives and spears, without our bows and arrows." To a question I put, he answered, "The Snakes never build their winter houses under ground." To other questions, he answered, "We can never venture in the open plains, for fear of the Blackfeet and Piegans, and for that reason never keep horses. Six of our people were killed by them this summer. Were we to live in large bands, we should easily be discovered." In reference to our road, he told us, that the country a-head was very rocky and bad, and that we could never make our way through it with horses. This miserable being, although the very picture of wretchedness, was far more intelligent and communicative than those we had got hold of on Reid's River. After passing a night with us, I gave him a knife, a small looking-glass, and a grain or two of vermilion; with which he went off highly delighted.

We continued our journey, winding through creeks and round rocks with great difficulty for eight days, until we had reached the extreme height of land between the sources of river Malade on the west, and Salmon River on the north. This ridge or height of land we passed on the 18th of September. The country was mountainous; and, a little to our right, was a towering peak, at least eight hundred feet higher than where we stood. Here, remaining a day to rest and refresh our jaded horses, I took a man along with me, in order to try and ascend this lofty peak. We set out at eight o'clock in the morning, and only got back at sunset, so tired, that we could scarcely drag ourselves along. But the view we enjoyed repaid us well for our trouble. On the top of this height was six inches of newly-fallen snow, and a small circular pond of water about twenty feet in diameter. This height I named after our Governor, Mount Simpson; and the basin of water on its top, the Governor's Punch Bowl. No elevated height in this country can present a more interesting prospect than that viewed from the top of Mount Simpson: to the west, in particular, it is of a highly picturesque character. On looking towards the north, "How," said I to myself, "are we to pass here?" The doubt remained until I turned to view the quarter whence we had come; when, seeing it nearly as wild and rugged as country could be, it struck me, that since we had passed through the one, we might attempt the other.

We therefore left Mount Simpson, and descending into the narrow and unknown strath of Salmon River, shaped our course for Canoe Point, the place where we had left our beaver *en cache*. On getting down to the bottom of the valley, day was almost turned into night, so high were the mountains on each side of us; and in many places the view was so confined, that we could see nothing but the sky above and the rocks around us. Here the Salmon River, some three hundred and fifty miles long, was scarcely four feet wide; but many rills and creeks pouring into it from the adjacent rocks, soon swelled it into a river.

It appeared to us at first probable that no human being had ever trod in that path before; but we were soon undeceived, for we had not been many hours there, before my people, in going about their horses, found a pheasant pierced with a fresh arrow, and not yet dead; so, at the moment we were indulging that idea, the Indians might have been within fifty yards of us. As we advanced the valley widened, and the deer were seen feeding in numerous herds, and so tame, that we shot many of them without alighting from our horses, or going off the road after them; but it was not until the third day that we put a trap in the water, and seven beaver was all we got to reward us for so much labour.

At the distance of forty-seven miles from Mount Simpson, we entered on the west side of a fine stream, nearly as large as the main branch, being from thirty to forty yards broad, with deep water and a strong current. This place we called the Forks; the west branch, Bear River. On reaching the Forks, we observed at some distance the appearance of a ploughed field, and riding up towards it, found a large piece of ground more than four acres in extent, dug up and turned over. On getting to the spot, we observed no less than nine black and grizzly bears at work, rooting away. We immediately gave them chace, and, with the help of some twenty or thirty dogs, got four of them surrounded in front of a lofty and crumbling precipice, up which they endeavoured to make their escape; but the place being steep, and the stones and gravel loose, they made but slow progress, and the more so, as the dogs kept attacking them behind. Our horses, however, were so frightened, and became so restive, that we could not manage them, nor get them to approach the game; for no animal terrifies a horse more than a bear. At last, dismounting, we let the horses go, and fired at the bears, which were still scrambling to get up the rocky precipice; we brought three of the four down, but they had got so entangled and surrounded by dogs, that in killing the bears we killed seven of the dogs.

After our adventure, we set off on a trip of discovery up Bear River, for about thirty-four miles. The valley through which the river flowed was very pleasant, but became narrow as we advanced. Four inches of new snow were on the ground, and the ice was an inch thick. The weather was cold, and in those snowy regions indicated an early winter; yet we persevered in our pursuit of beaver, notwithstanding our course lay north, and we had yet before us some six or seven hundred miles before we reached our winter quarters. The wood on the banks of Bear River was only stunted willows, nor was there any other description in the neighbourhood fit for anything but fire; and but little even fit for that, if we except, now and then, a solitary pine not bigger than a good broom.

On rounding one of the many rocky points, we observed, some distance a-head of us, two animals frolicking in the water; on approaching the place, we discovered two black bears, and got so near as to shoot one of them in the water. While dragging it to shore, we noticed a beaver concealing itself in the shoal water, and this circumstance led us to ascertain why the bear should have been standing so long in the water. We found, by the number of tracks about the place, that the bears had been in pursuit of the beaver; there being but one deep hole where it could have swum under water and made its escape. At that place was artfully stationed the bear we had shot, while the other kept pursuing its object in the pool of water, where we found it, and it would have succeeded in killing the beaver but for our arrival.

Leaving six men to trap, I and another man returned to camp the second day, in order to examine the road by which we had to pass down the main river; but we found it so absolutely bad, that nothing but necessity compelled us to undertake it. After trapping for three days up Bear River, the six men returned to the camp, having killed one hundred and fifteen beaver. We then raised camp, left the Forks, and continued our route down the main branch of Salmon River.

About ten miles below the Forks, we entered a narrow and gloomy defile, where the mountains on each side closed in upon the river, between which the stream became confined like the water race of a mill, and shot through the narrow channel in a white foaming cascade, with the noise of thunder. Along the margin of the river in this dangerous place, the rocks and precipices descended almost perpendicularly to the water's edge, affording only a tortuous path some fifty or sixty feet above the water, in the face of the precipice. On this road we had advanced one day until we were abruptly stopped by a dangerous chasm where a piece of the hanging cliffs had slidden down, leaving a deep and yawning gap of some yards broad across the road, over which we could not pass. Here the horses being unable to get forward or backward, not having room to turn round, we had to use ropes to extricate several of them from their perilous situation; all hands calling out, "hold fast!" "hold fast!" While we in front were engaged in this no less dangerous than difficult task, the others, beginning at the rear, got the remainder turned back. We then retraced our steps about a mile, where we encamped. Here all our horses had to be tied, and we spent a restless night, under the apprehension that we should have to go back again to Mount Simpson and seek another pass to get clear of the mountains; which would have taken us, at that late season, some weeks and some hundred miles to accomplish.

After encamping, one of the men jocularly observed, that we ought to call the place "Hold fast!" and the name remained. On the next day, however, we resolved on attempting to cross the river; we examined it in several places, tried, and tried again, but failed the first day; the next, with difficulty, we crossed it to the opposite side. In this undertaking we drowned one of the horses, and lost four of our steel traps and about twenty-five beaver; and with the utmost difficulty we saved ourselves. Yet although we had accomplished the laborious task, we were not yet sure of getting through. From the crossing-place we wound among rocks and other obstructions for nearly two days, without advancing more than six or seven furlongs! At last, however, getting down again to the river, we got altogether clear of the defile on the eighth day. We reached Canoe Point at the end of a few hours' ride, after leaving the defile, and found the beaver we had left *en cache* safe.

At Canoe Point we remained for two days to rest and refresh our horses; for nearly one half of them were more or less lame, their hoofs being worn to the quick. Without being shod, no animals can stand the journeys through such a rugged country; and after one Snake expedition many of them are rendered useless. No less than twenty-seven of our horses had to be muffled about the feet with leather, which is at best but a temporary makeshift.

The season had now arrived when I was to send to meet the Iroquois who left us on the 16th of June, and on leaving Canoe Point I despatched six men to the Trois Têtons south of Goddin's River, the appointed rendezvous; while we proceeded on our journey in order to trap and make provisions for our voyage home, having appointed a place near the head waters of the Missouri where we were all to meet again. On the third day after starting, Jean Baptiste Bouché, one of the aged freemen, died in his sixty-ninth year: he had been ailing for some time, and for the last ten days had to be carried about on a litter. The deceased was a quiet, sober, and industrious man. We buried him in our camp, and burned the grave over, so that no enemy might disturb his remains; and near to the spot stands a friendly tree, bearing the inscription of his name, age, and the date of his death. As we advanced, we reached in a short time an immense herd of buffaloes, and commenced laying in a stock of provisions, until the men I had sent for the Iroquois should return.

While on the subject of buffalo, we may notice that there is perhaps not an animal that roams in this, or in the wilds of any other country, more fierce and formidable, than a buffalo bull during the rutting season: neither the Polar bear, nor the Bengal tiger, surpass that animal in ferocity. When not mortally wounded, buffalo turn upon man or horse; but when mortally wounded, they stand fiercely eyeing their assailant, until life ebbs away.

As we were travelling one day among a herd, we shot at a bull and wounded him severely—so much so, that he could neither run after us, nor from us; propping himself on his legs, therefore, he stood looking at us till we had fired ten balls through his body, now and then giving a shake of the head. Although he was apparently unable to stir, yet we kept at a respectful distance from him; for such is the agility of body and quickness of eye, and so hideous are the looks of buffalo, that we dared not for some time approach him: at last, one more bold than the rest went up and pushed the beast over;—he was dead! If not brought to the ground by the first or second shot, let the hunter be on his guard! The old bulls, when badly wounded and unable to pursue their assailant, prop themselves, as we have seen, and often stand in that position till dead; but the head of a wounded bull, while in an upright position, is invariably turned to his pursuer; so if the hunter be in doubt, let him change his position, to see if the bull changes his position also. The surest mark of his being mortally wounded and unable to stir, is, when he cannot turn his head round to his pursuer; in that case, you may safely walk up and throw him down.

The wild cow calves generally at one period, and that period later by a month than our tame cattle; then they all, as if with one accord, withdraw themselves from the mountains and rocks, and resort in large families to the valleys, where there is open ground, with small clumps of wood affording shelter and preservation; as there they can see the approach of an enemy from afar. The cows herd together in the centre, and the bulls graze in the distance: all in sight of each other.

The calving season is May, when the heat of the son is sufficiently strong for the preservation of their young in the open air; during which time the herd feeds round and round the place as if to defend the young calves from the approach of an enemy or from wolves. The resident Indian tribes seldom hunt or disturb the buffalo at this season, or before the first of July. The Indians often assured me, that, during the calving season, the bulls keep guard; and have been frequently known to assemble together, in order to keep at a distance any wolves, bears, or other enemies, that might attempt to approach the cows.

The men whom I had sent some time ago from Canoe Point in search of the Iroquois, had arrived, but had not met with them; they met with enemies instead, having a very narrow escape from a war party of the Blackfeet, who came upon them early one morning just as they were preparing to start; and so suddenly, that our people had to leave one of their horses as a prey to them. Fortunately for our people, the Indians were all on foot. I, however, lost no time in sending off, on the second day after their arrival, another party double in number to the first. They fortunately got safely back on the 14th of October, after an absence of ten days; bringing along with them not only the ten Iroquois, but seven American trappers likewise.

But they arrived trapless and beaverless; naked and destitute of almost everything; and in debt to the American trappers for having conveyed them to the Trois Têtons!

And this is their story. "We proceeded," said Old Pierre, "in a southerly direction, crossed over the main river, and struck into the interior to be out of the way of Indians; there we trapped with good success for nearly two months. At last some of the Snakes found us out, and Canataye-hare took one of their women for a wife, for whom he gave one of his horses. The Indians wished for another horse, but were refused; the wife deserted, and we changed to another place to avoid the Indians. There a war party fell on us, and robbed us of everything. We had nine hundred beaver, fifty-four steel traps, and twenty-seven horses: all of which, together with five of our guns, and nearly all our clothing, the Indians carried off! Naked and destitute as we then were, we set out on our way back; and on the third day after starting we fell in with the Americans; we promised them forty dollars to escort us back to Goddin's River, where we arrived the evening before the men you sent to meet us: and the Americans came along with us here. They had a good many beaver; but put them all *en cache* till they returned back." Such is the tale Old Pierre told me. When it was ended, I said, "Well, Pierre, what did I tell you at parting?" He held down his head, and said nothing.

I then questioned the Americans, who appeared to be shrewd men: they confirmed part of the Iroquois' story. Smith, a very intelligent person, and who seemed to be the leading man among them, acknowledged to me that he had received one hundred and five beaver for escorting back the Iroquois to Goddin's River, although Pierre had not touched upon this circumstance at all: no two of them, however, told the story in the same way; nor did the Americans agree in their version of it, so that it appeared to me to be a piece of trickery from beginning to end. Some time after they had arrived, however, another story got into circulation; perhaps the true one. This story was not that they had been robbed, as Old Pierre had stated, but that while on their hunting ground, they fell in with the seven Americans noticed, who succeeded in seducing them to their side, under the pretext of giving them five dollars for every beaver-skin they might deliver at the Yellow Stone River, where the Americans had a trading-post; that with the view to profit by this contemplated speculation, they had left their furs *en cache* with those of the American party where they had been hunting, and had come back, not with the intention of remaining with us, but rather, as the story ran, to get what they could from us, and then to seduce their comrades to desert in a body with their furs to the Americans, as a party of them had already done in 1822: this story I had no difficulty in believing.

I, however, thought it best not to say that I either heard or believed this last story; at the same time I tried to find out the truth of it: I knew there must be some knavery going on between the Americans and the Iroquois, from the constant intercourse that existed between them. I, however, took such steps as would most effectually prevent the possibility of their being able to carry their intentions into effect. It aided my plans greatly that the enemy kept hovering about, and I of course exaggerated the danger, making it a pretext for doubling the watch by night, and remaining on guard myself; but, in truth, it was to prevent either the Iroquois or the Americans from taking any undue advantage of us: in the meantime I daily forced our march to get the nearer to home.

The measures we adopted succeeded so well, that the Americans at last gave up the idea, preferring the protection of our camp to the risk of turning back.

# CHAPTER XIII.

Report—Enemies in sight—The agreeable mistake—The ten Nez Percés—Their story—Suspicious defile—Reconnoitring party—Enemies discovered—The pursuit—A hard ride—The hiding place—Gathering the spoil—The peace-offering—Suspicious party—Anxieties of the whites—The surprise—The stolen horses—The thieves caught—Indians mute—Nez Percés reproved—Thieves in custody—Return to camp—The court-martial—Wild fowl—Sporting—Hard shooting—World of game—The mourning scene—The snowy mountain—Change of scenery—Valley of Troubles again—Ice and snow—Cold travelling—Hell's Gates—A horse drowned—Arrive at Flathead house—Fruits of the expedition—Remarks—Yankee enterprise—New plan proposed—The men—Contemplated results—Depôt for the returns—Wants created—Inland position—Speculation—Sketch of the Snake people—Position of the Snakes—Their courage—Snake language.

We had no sooner done with the adventures of our absent trappers than the people were thrown into confusion by a report that enemies were approaching the camp. And although such reports were not unfrequent, they never failed to create a momentary thrill, whenever a sudden alarm was given. This is unavoidable.

We prepared to receive the comers either as friends or foes, but were soon agreeably relieved from our fears, by finding that they were our friends, the Nez Percés. These poor weather-beaten wanderers, only ten in number, passed the night with us, and amused us with recounting their wild adventures. We shall give the reader their own simple story.

"When we left our own country, about three months ago," said they, "our object was to fall in with the whites in the Snake country. We were then seventeen in number, and on foot, the better to conceal ourselves from the enemy. We intended to have stolen horses for ourselves from the Blackfeet had an opportunity offered, in revenge for those they had taken from us at Hell's Gates in the spring. One turned back, and in crossing a rocky defile at the head waters of the Missouri, we were discovered, and waylaid by the Blackfeet; six were killed in that unfortunate affray, and the rest of us had a very narrow escape, only getting clear of the enemy by escaping in the dark. From that time we only travelled at night. Despairing of meeting the whites, and seeing the buffalo moving to and fro, we knew that there must be enemies lurking about, and had to hide ourselves; we suffered greatly from hunger and thirst, and had almost given up any hopes of getting back to our own country again, when all at once we perceived the whites coming, whom at first we took for a large war-party."

After they had related the story of their troubles, they began to mourn for their unfortunate relations who were killed in the defile; then they appeared overjoyed at getting under the protection of the whites, and vowed vengeance against the Blackfeet.

The Nez Percés telling us that there were enemies lurking about, and we having a suspicious defile to pass, I thought it well to have the place examined before raising camp the next day. This being settled, I took five of the Indians along with us, and we set off to the number of six-and-thirty persons, taking care to have two of the Americans and the most troublesome of my own men among the party. Just as we had got the bad part examined, and reached the other side, we perceived, at a long distance off, a number of moving objects making for the mountains; but whether men or deer we could not ascertain. Losing no time, however, we resolved on giving chace, and therefore set off at full speed to get between the objects we saw and the woods they seemed to be making for. Before we had advanced far, we were satisfied that the objects were men and not deer; which made us quicken our steps.

The Indians, on discovering us, began to quicken their pace, and make for a hiding-place. We at the same time advanced at full speed. The match was warmly contested; but the Indians won the race by a short distance, and got to the bush before we could reach them. In their hurry, however, they had thrown away everything that encumbered them, robes, shoes, and some of them even their bows and arrows; and yet after all, we had got near enough to have fired upon the last of them before they got under cover, had we been so disposed. Immediately on getting to the bush where the Indians had taken shelter, we dismounted, and invited them to come out of the woods and smoke with us, assuring them that we were their friends; but they answered, "Come in here and smoke with us: we are your friends." We then sat down on a little rising ground close to the Indians, to rest our horses a little, for we had given them a good heating; keeping all the time in talk with the Indians. They gave us to understand that they were Crows, the name of a tribe on the Missouri; but although they spoke to us in that language, the impression on our minds was, that they were Blackfeet, and we told them so; this they denied, on account, no doubt, of having killed the Nez Percés, some of whom they now saw with us.

Some of the people in the meantime went and gathered together what things the Indians in their hurry threw away; namely, sixteen buffalo robes, six dressed skins, fifty-two pairs of mocassins, and two quivers full of bows and arrows; all of which we laid in a pile, telling the Indians we did not wish to injure them, nor take away anything belonging to them. Then taking a piece of tobacco we stuck it on a forked stick at the edge of the bush, for them to smoke after our departure. To questions we put, they denied having seen the six men sent to river Goddin, or the horse which they had lost; they said there were several parties of Blackfeet and Piegans both, not far off; that they themselves had been looking for some of their absent friends, but were now on their way back to their own country. We then prepared to return, but had some difficulty in preventing the Nez Percés from taking the spoil we had picked up, and also from firing on the Indians in the bush; however, I told them that, since they were with the whites, and put themselves under our protection, they must do as we did; but that if they were bent on revenge, they might stop where they were until we had gone away, and then settle matters as they might think proper.

As we were in the act of mounting our horses to return, we perceived at a distance the appearance of a crowd of men and horses, following the track by which the Indians had come, and making straight for us. From their appearance at a distance they seemed very numerous, and taking them for another war-party, we considered ourselves between two fires. Not wishing, however, to run off, we examined a small point of the woods near to the Indians, where we could retreat in case of being too hard pressed; we then secured our horses, under a guard of ten men, while the other twenty-six, with their guns ready, awaited the arrival of the suspicious party.

As soon as we had observed them, we discovered the party to consist of four men only, driving, however, a large band of horses before them; when they had got within a few hundred yards of us they made a halt, which they had no sooner done, than I ordered twenty of my men to remain where they were, as a guard on the Indians, while I and the other fifteen set off to meet, and see who the new comers were. On getting up to them, what was our surprise on finding forty-three of our own horses, and also the one taken from my men on their trip to the trappers; all of which the four villains had stolen and were driving before them.

On our approach the thieves immediately fled; we pursued, and got hold of three of them, the fourth making his escape among the rocks. They belonged to the party in the bush. Our first impression was to have punished the offenders on the spot; but reflecting a little that there might have been other horses stolen, we kept them as hostages, to see how things would end. I therefore carried them back to our camp.

After the bustle was over, we secured the thieves, and collected all our horses; then returning to the place where I had left the twenty men to guard the Indians, we tried to re-open a communication with them. But they would not speak a word to us, although they spoke to each other in our hearing. So we took all the property we had picked up belonging to them, also the tobacco I had left for them to smoke, together with the three prisoners, and returned to our camp; where we arrived late, after a hard day's work.

On reaching the camp, we were told that the stolen horses had not been missed until late in the afternoon, although they must have been driven off soon after we started in the morning: two parties had been in pursuit, but none of them happened to fall on their trail; and had they escaped us, we never should have seen one of them. The rest of our horses being safe, we held a court-martial on the three criminals, when the sentence pronounced by every voice in the camp, with the exception of myself and two others, was to have them shot; but after giving them a good fright, I managed to procure their escape the following day. Raising camp, therefore, we commenced our journey through the defile we had examined the day before, taking the condemned criminals with us as prisoners. With a view of preventing the sentence from being put into execution, I selected some men on whom I could depend, and delivered the criminals into their hands, with strict orders to let them go while passing through the defile. The Nez Percés, Iroquois, and I, for obvious reasons, went on ahead, and all ended as I wished.

I was very happy that the miserable wretches got off with their lives, for depriving them of life would have done us no good, neither would it have checked horse-stealing in those barbarous places.

Having once more got out of our troubles with the natives, we pursued our homeward journey with great eagerness, as the cold of winter was closely pressing us in the rear. We, however, continued trapping and hunting, in order to make up, in some degree, for the loss we had sustained by the misconduct of the Iroquois.

It not unfrequently happened, however, that natural causes operated against us; for we had to break the ice in order to relieve our traps almost every morning; nor was this all: the immense flocks of wild fowl which hovered about the numberless rivulets and pools at the head-waters of the Missouri and other minor rivers, in their passage to a warmer climate, tempted even the most industrious among us to forego the more profitable pursuit of trapping for the gratification of shooting geese and ducks. Much time was, therefore, lost, and much ammunition spent, to little purpose.

But this superabundance of wild fowl was not the only attraction to divert our attention. We were, at the same time, surrounded on all sides by herds of buffalo, deer, moose, and elk, as well as grouse, pheasants, and rabbits. From morning to night, therefore, scarcely anything else was to be heard about our camp but the sound of guns and the cries of wild fowl and other animals.

As we journeyed among the rocks and defiles, the Nez Percés took us a little out of our way, and showed us the spot where their six companions had fallen a sacrifice to the fury of their enemies; and also the place where the Blackfeet who had killed them lay in ambush. That one of them escaped with their lives was a matter of wonder to us. These victims had, according to Indian custom, been all scalped, cut to pieces, and their limbs strewed about the place. On arriving at the fatal spot, the poor fellows wrought themselves into a frantic state of mourning, tearing their hair, cutting their flesh, and howling like wild beasts for some time; then gathering up the remains of the dead, they buried them at a distance.

After a few days' hard travelling, with more or less success in the way of hunting, we encamped at the foot of the celebrated mountain where we had spent so much anxious labour in the spring, cutting our road of eighteen miles long through a mass of snow from eight to ten feet deep. The scene was wholly changed: the mountain, then so terrific, was now the reverse; all the old snow had been swept away by the summer heat. A sprinkling of new-fallen snow, not six inches deep, was all that concealed the features of the surface from the eye; and the next day, in six hours' time, we crossed it without ever alighting from our horses. We encamped in the Valley of Troubles, equally celebrated as being our prison for thirty-five days; but its appearance at this season, although still wrapped in the white mantle of snow, was more cheering than it was in the spring. At this time we could smile with content, inasmuch as every step put our difficulties further behind us. Here we set our traps, but only obtaining two otters, and no beaver, our trapping ceased.

Soon after we had encamped, fresh tracks, supposed to be those of enemies, were discovered; which made me remark that there was no passing that place without troubles. We therefore doubled the guard on our camp and horses; but next morning all was safe. Raising camp, therefore, we bade farewell to the Valley of Troubles, continued our march, and visited the Ram's Head again. Our road was encumbered with ice and snow, over which we had to make our way with difficulty till we reached Hell's Gates. Nor at that place were our troubles diminished; for the river which we had to cross was partially frozen over with ice, both solid and drift, and, with our utmost care, one of our horses was drowned, and two of our men were nearly sharing its fate.

Hell's Gates being now behind us, as well as our dreaded enemies, we looked upon the danger and troubles of the journey as ended. We quickened our pace, and every step now became more and more cheering, until the termination of our journey at Flathead House, which we reached at the end of November. As the reader may wish to know the extent of our success in the object of our pursuit, after all our toils, I may say that, all things considered, our returns were the most profitable ever brought from the Snake country in one year; amounting to 5000 beaver, exclusive of other peltries. I had the satisfaction of receiving, from Governor Simpson, a letter of thanks on the success of the expedition. This brings our Snake adventures to a close.

The most prominent defects of the present trapping system and Snake expeditions are, first, the quality of the hands employed; secondly, the equipping depôt; and thirdly, the mode of regulating the annual trips. In the selection of men for a Snake expedition, it has always been customary, heretofore, to collect all the refuse about the different establishments, merely with a view, it would appear, to make up numbers:—all the lazy, cross-grained, and objectionable among the engaged class; the superannuated, infirm, and backsliding freemen; the wayward half-breed, the ignorant native; and, last of all, and worst of all, the plotting and faithless Iroquois:—taking it for granted that, if conducted by an experienced leader, all would go on well.

So long as Spokane House is made the starting point, so long will the Snake business be a loss. The distance is too great; and experience has proved that in proportion to the distance, so are the risks and disappointments. Now we have already pointed out the locality of Spokane House; but, that its unfitness may, if possible, be convincing to all, we shall make such further remarks as will set the question at rest for ever. The distance, then, from Nez Percés, by Spokane House, to reach the Snake country, subjects the trapper to a laborious journey of 690 miles more than he would be subject to by starting direct from Nez Percés: the roads are worse, and the natives more hostile. The distance from Nez Percés to Oakinacken is 200 miles north; from Oakinacken to Spokane House, 140 miles east; from Spokane House to the Flatheads, 170 miles east by south; and from the Flatheads to the Valley of Troubles, 180 miles south. These distances are, perhaps, not critically correct, but they are near the truth. The Valley of Troubles we consider to be the parallel of Nez Percés, lying in the direction of almost due east: for when the trapper is there, he is not nearer to the Snake country than he was when at Nez Percés, the point from whence he started.

As this distance cannot be performed in winter, it has to be travelled in the spring and fall of the year, and at the time the trapper ought to be engaged in his field of chase: indeed, he ought to be on his hunting-ground all the year round.

And in the annual trips also, the whole body of trappers abandoning their hunting-ground every autumn, and returning thither every spring, is discouraging: it subjects them to severe trials, unnecessary expense, loss of time, and not unfrequently loss of lives, from the danger of the route. Their short visits and casual sojournings never allow them either time or opportunity to make good hunts, or to form a community of interests with the natives. Everything, therefore, essential to both parties, in as far as regards the interest of the trader or the social improvement of the Indians, is, and has always been, lost sight of by the mistaken policy of the whites.

Let the reader turn back and take a glance at Point Turnagain, and there he will find that we had to commence our homeward journey on the 24th of August, at the very time we ought to have been preparing for commencing our fall hunts; and then we only got to the Flatheads on the ice and snows of winter.

Having briefly stated, and I hope satisfactorily, some of the evils resulting from the present system, I now come to propose the remedy. I have advocated the plan, although without success, for the last ten years; and the more I have seen of the country and its resources, the more I am convinced of its proving successful.

Our southern and more enterprising neighbours have not lost sight of the advantages thus offered them, but continue year after year advancing with hasty strides, scouring the country, and carrying off the cream of the trade; and if we do not speedily bestir ourselves, the Yankees will reap all the advantages of our discoveries. While our great men west of the mountains, as we have often stated, look on with a degree of supineness unparalleled in former days; contenting themselves with the fabulous tales of others, and too often listening to the unfavourable side of things: as is manifest from their adherence to the old system. These dignitaries no sooner attain what they consider the last step in promotion's ladder, than they sink down at once into indolence and spend the remainder of their probationary term at ease; as if promotion quenched ambition and lulled the passion of enterprise to sleep: this has given rise to a common saying in this country, that one chief clerk is worth two chief traders, and one chief trader is worth two chief factors. Nor is the remark perhaps destitute of truth, for during the eight years the Snake country had been under the North-West Company, and the four years it has now been subject to the Hudson's Bay Company, neither a Bourgeois of the former, nor a titled functionary of the latter, has ever yet set a foot in that quarter to see and judge for himself.

Now to my plan. First, I hold Fort Nez Percés to be the most eligible starting point for the trade of the Snake country, so long as the Columbia River is the port of transportation; for it possesses more advantages and is liable to fewer objections than any other.

Taking Nez Percés as the starting point in future, I would next advert to what may be called the mainspring of all the machinery—the kind of trappers most fitted to the business of the Snake country. Good, steady men of character, thrifty and persevering, are the men required, no matter to what class or country they may belong: such hands can always be depended upon; their own interest would be a guarantee for their good conduct. In short, such men as the general run of servants throughout the country are; or I would say the more steady and better class of them.

These men would not, however, be denominated freemen; for in this country there is something depraved in the word freedom. They should be engaged for three or five years; and once on their field of chase, there remain stationary, for the purpose of trapping beaver at all seasons of the year, or such other duties as might be found necessary. With such men as we have described, and under such regulations, there would be little doubt as to a successful issue. Besides, we possess advantages now which we did not before: we know the country, we know the natives, we know the best hunting-grounds, and we are acquainted with the best roads, the difficulties, the dangers, the wants of the natives, and the requisite articles for carrying on the trade to the best advantage. In fact, we know almost everything connected with the business.

The trappers remaining on their trapping-ground all the year round, could avail themselves, under an active and intelligent conductor, of all the advantages the country possesses; and they would have this additional advantage, that in conveying their furs to Fort Nez Percés, they would do so, not as formerly at the expense of their spring or fall hunt, but in the middle of summer, when there is no hunting going on. In the heat of summer, the beaver is always of an inferior quality, and then all trapping ceases for a certain time. This season would also be the time when the hostile tribes would be absent, either hunting the buffalo or at war, and consequently removed out of the way of the whites; so that the route would be clear and the roads safe.

In the Snake country there is a field large enough and rich enough for one hundred trappers, for a quarter of a century to come. But I will go upon a smaller scale, and begin the business on this new plan, with the same number as was employed formerly; say fifty, with five extra hands as a camp guard. Now in my late expedition, with the medley of fifty-five men, which composed my party at first, there were only twenty-eight of the number trappers; some even of that number very indifferent, and badly provided with traps, having only, on an average, five each, when they ought to have had double that number on such long journeys. As we got a few skins from the Iroquois before they left the party and after they joined it again, and as I wish to make my calculations upon as fair a scale as possible, I shall say that I only lost the hunts of eight, leaving my number of actual trappers just twenty; yet they averaged

250 beaver each. Now if twenty trappers produce 5000 beaver in a given time, a simple question in the rule of three will tell us that fifty trappers ought to produce 12,500 beaver in the same time. And if we calculate upon the quality of the hands, and the superior advantages they would possess, in time as well as in everything else, we ought reasonably to anticipate at least one-third more from them; the supply being inexhaustible.

But it is not on a starting point, nor on the trappers alone, that the success of the business on the improved system will chiefly depend; we must have a trading establishment in the Snake country likewise, to serve as a rallying point for all hands, where they could assemble at stated periods. This establishment would serve as a depôt for the returns, where they would remain in safety, from time to time, to wait the season of transportation; and would relieve the hunters from the risk of carrying about their beaver, on weak and jaded horses, all the year round; or of making *caches*, a practice never free from more or less risk.

The advantages, however, of an establishment of this kind can only be fully appreciated by those conversant with the more minute details of the business.

Now let us see how far an establishment of this kind would benefit the natives, or be favourable to the trade generally. The Snakes have invited us often to form an establishment among them.

They are often engaged in a defensive war; they have no traders, consequently they are under every disadvantage. Not an hour, therefore, but they would be teasing us for something: one would want a gun—a gun requires ammunition; and what one would be in want of, so would another, so would all. In short, they want everything, for they have nothing; and by the time we could supply them with all their wants, we should be enriched and they would be civilised. They have promised us every protection and every encouragement, and so anxious are they to obtain the boon, that their promises were unbounded, and we left them with regret. The natives are numerous, beaver plentiful, and a growing desire to possess our toys and trinkets would soon make them industrious hunters. On the whole, but few heavy articles would be required; as clothing they do not want. Vermilion, beads, and buttons, axes, knives, awls, and needles, are the articles most desired by them, next to their warlike implements. A blacksmith, and a few hundred weight of iron attached to the establishment, would alone be worth a whole trapping expedition.

The establishment would be a simple stockaded fort or trading post; the erection of which would cost next to nothing, for the trappers, during the idle season, would be amply sufficient to do all the work necessary, as is customary in other parts of the country. It might or might not be a permanent establishment: it might be here this year, and removed to the distance of a hundred miles the next, as occasion required; it being chiefly intended as a stronghold for the benefit of the trappers, as well as for the convenience of trading with the natives. At the same time, the trappers would, in a more or less degree, by their presence in the vicinity, serve as a guard for its protection.

And a post once established among them, the last but not the least essential part of this simple plan of improvement is to abolish altogether the transportation of property, either furs or merchandise, by horses, and avail ourselves of the superior advantages offered by water communication; it having been satisfactorily proved, in the spring of 1819, by Mr. M'Kenzie, that the navigation of the south branch is perfectly practicable.

The expenses, therefore, both as to men and merchandise, of this post, exclusive of the hunters, would be but a mere trifle annually; and it would be well worth the experiment, for the security and advantages it would afford to the trappers alone. But I will now view it solely in the light of a trading post: as such, the Indians would flock to it from all quarters, from interest as well as curiosity; and the spirit of emulation would be kindled among a people long neglected. All the Snakes would become purchasers, and every purchaser would have to become a beaver hunter. But let us not raise our expectations too high. The Snakes are not now beaver hunters; but there is no doubt that they would, like other Indians, soon become so, on the introduction of whites among them; as the possession of one article would create a desire to possess another: and in the meantime their numbers would make up for their unskilfulness.

Keeping these points in view, I would notice that there are 36,000 souls in the Snake country; and allowing six to a family, that would give 6000 families. Now my anticipations would not surely be stretched beyond moderation, in expecting two beaver skins from each family, even for the first year; equal to 12,000 beaver. And should the trappers realise our expectations, in doing their duty, both results put together would yield 24,500 beaver annually. That ought, according to the new system, to be the returns of the Snake country in future; and might have been the returns for years past, had men been alive to their own interests.

I have endeavoured to make myself understood, by developing the outline of the plan as plainly on paper as it appears in all its parts practicable to me. But as I have not calculated the more minute details of all the expenses which this branch of the trade would cost, nor perhaps made all due allowances for contingencies (which could not well be done), I dare not affirm what the annual profits would be; but were I to hazard an opinion I should estimate the clear gain at not less than ten thousand pounds sterling per annum.

Having presented the reader with a sketch of my plan for improving the trade of the Snake country, I shall next make a few remarks on the condition of the natives, as we found them; and finally, conclude with a brief specimen of their language.

Although I have divided the great Snake nation into three separate sections, the distinction cannot be considered very definite, since they invariably mix and intermarry with each other. Besides, they all seem to be governed by the same laws: their manners, their feelings, and their principal habits are likewise the same. Taking them altogether then, as a family of the human race, they have been considered and represented as rather a dull and degraded people, diminutive in size, weak in intellect, and wanting in courage. And this opinion is very probable to a casual observer at first sight, or when seen in small numbers; for their apparent timidity, grave, and reserved habits, give them an air of stupidity.

An intimate knowledge of the Snake character will, however, place them on an equal footing with those of other kindred nations, either east or west of the mountains, both in respect to their mental faculties and moral attributes. The Snakes, from their inland position, have seldom been visited by the whites; nor was it until the Oregon territory began to attract public attention, and stimulate a spirit of inquiry into the regions of the far west, that the Snakes, as a nation, became generally known. Nor had traders ever penetrated into that distant wilderness; so that they remained, until lately, in their primeval simplicity. Meanwhile they have been surrounded on all sides by powerful and warlike nations, which nations have, for nearly a century past, been frequented by traders, and consequently, all that time, furnished with fire-arms and other weapons of war; to the great annoyance and almost ruin of the poor and defenceless Snakes, who have had to defend their country and protect themselves with the simple bow and arrow, against the destructive missiles of their numerous enemies.

Hence it was that the Blackfeet, the Piegans, and other tribes east of the mountains, and, at a later period, those on the Columbia likewise, have made the Snake country the theatre of war; and hence the Snakes, from their unarmed and defenceless state, have been stigmatised as a dastardly race unskilled in the art of war. Thus it is that so many slaves, scalps, and other barbarous trophies have, from time to time, been taken from them and carried off; and these occasional successes have always been represented to their disadvantage, without, however, once assigning the real cause—the unequal combat which they carried on. But arm the Snakes, and put them upon an equal footing with their adversaries, and I will venture to say, from what I have seen of them, that few Indians surpass them in boldness or moral courage: my only wonder is, that they have been able, under so many discouraging circumstances, to exist as a nation, and preserve their freedom and independence so long.

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## SNAKE LANGUAGE.

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| One | Shameata. |
| Two | Watts. |
| Three | Payaishop. |
| Four | Whatsaw. |
| Five | Mannee. |
| Ten | Equamoaks. |
| Beaver | Chinish. |
| Camp | Cannought. |
| Whites | Tabeboo. |
| Indians | Shoshonee. |
| Good | Tisand. |
| Bad | Quoitsand. |
| Water | Paw. |
| River | Parrow. |
| Salmon | Agaitsh. |
| Mountain | Tiebit. |
| Cross over | Mairmaw. |
| Far off | Mirancoineal. |
| Near to | Steesheetz. |
| Sun | Sabeigh. |
| Moon | Mayhow. |
| Night | E'Oh. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Sleep | [illegible] |
| Tongue | Johumby. |
| Morning | Eyeesquittaw. |
| Guard | Tecoma. |
| Iron | Wyuck. |
| Nose | Mep. |
| Eyes | Postalll. |
| Ears | Estate. |
| Hand | Mawne. |
| Hair | Banks. |
| Dog | Sherry. |
| Horse | Warack. |
| Buffalo | Pishiah. |
| Blanket | Catto. |
| Knife | Wheat. |
| Large | Buyap. |
| Small | Eyoutaatcaw. |
| Fat | Payuhoope. |
| Poor | Cowa. |
| Gun | Kooreackack. |
| House | Nobill. |
| Thief | Kaysleonand. |
| Again | Tioasa tiaa. |
| Fear | Pyeanttea. |
| Yes | Kaick. |
| No | Waype. |
| Work | Gouree. |

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⁂ It is now a quarter of a century, or more, since the discussion of the trade of the Snake country occupied the attention of fur-traders. In those days it was, indeed, a question of some importance, and worth contending for; but that importance was at the time, as the reader must be aware, overlooked, or at least never taken advantage of, by the English traders then in the country; and it is now regarded by those who knew no better as a tale twice told—of little value. True, the lapse of years have brought about many changes, and, among others, the country itself may be said to have changed masters; nevertheless, up to the present day it has not diminished in riches nor in importance to fur-traders. And however I may regret that my remarks were not made public at the time I first wrote, I am not on that account to look on things past and gone as utterly useless; nor ought what I have said to be considered as out of place, inasmuch as it illustrates the history of a bygone period. I can state with undiminished confidence, that the Snake country towards the Rocky Mountains is, and will be, rich in furs for some generations to come, and full of interest to men of enterprise. Indeed, the dangers by which it was then, and still is, in a more or less degree, surrounded, will always tend to preserve the furs in that inland quarter. Small trapping parties can never ruin the country, but they will ruin themselves. It is only strong and formidable parties that can ever inherit these riches; and now that the Americans are fast spreading themselves in that direction, these mines of wealth will not be overlooked, nor the long-neglected natives, we trust, be allowed to remain much longer in darkness and idolatry.

# CHAPTER XIV.

Dawn of education on the Oregon—Speech of a Kootanais chief—The farewell—Juvenile adventurers—Result—Flathead River—The Forks—Interview—Party set out for the Rocky Mountains—Parting scene—Facilities—Bold undertaking—View of the subject—Kettle Falls—Fort Colville—Remarks—Gloomy place—Petit Dalles—Some account of the place—Islands—A boat in jeopardy—Kootanais River—Stony barrier—Desolation—No Indians—No animals—First lake—Extent—Scenery—The wounded Indian—Jealousy in the wilderness—New-fashioned canoes—Link between the lakes—Upper lake—Sudden appearance of an Indian—Chief of the Sinatcheggs—His story—Some account of his country and people—The deception—Length of upper lake—Some account of the country—The child—Peace-offering—The wretched flock—Gloomy aspect—Perilous navigation—The ideal city—M'Kenzie's River—Dalles des Morts—Seat of desolation—Natural curiosity—Moisture—Castle-rock cave—Transparent substances—A man in a gold mine—Ross's River—Cataract creeks—The circus—Diamond creek—Brilliant objects—Beaver islands—M'Millan's River—Landscape in confusion—Belle Vue point—Deceitful windings—The steersman's warning—Canoe River—Northernmost point of Columbia—Portage River—Main branch—Length of north branch—Land on Portage point—Columbia voyage concluded.

HAVING closed my remarks on the Snake country, I resume my narrative. The reader will remember that we had reached the Flatheads at the end of November. I passed the winter in charge there; and during my residence was desired by Governor Simpson to try and procure two Indian boys from their relations, for the purpose of being educated at Red River Colony. This was a new and promising feature in the policy of the place—it was the dawn of a brighter day west of the mountains, and ought long to be remembered with gratitude.

These natives, notwithstanding their aversion to part with their children—and particularly so on this occasion, it being the first proposal that had ever been made to them by the whites, for their children to leave their native country, either for education or any other purpose—had so much confidence that, after a council or two had sat, the chiefs not only complied with the request, but, as a more striking example of their willingness, agreed to let two of their own children avail themselves of the proffered boon, whom they without hesitation delivered up to me.

When the business was over, with all the ceremony attending it, the father of one of the boys got up and made an harangue:—"You see," said he to me, "we have given you our children: not our servants, or our slaves, but our own children;" striking at the same time one hand on his left breast, and with the other pointing to one of his wives, the mother of the boy. "We have given you our hearts—our children are our hearts; but bring them back again to us before they become white men—we wish to see them once more Indians—and after that, you can make them white men, if you like. But let them not get sick, nor die: if they get sick, we shall get sick; if they die, we shall die. Take them; they are now yours." The chief then sat down, when all present broke out into lamentations; after which the chiefs rose, and putting the boys' hands into mine, we parted. The scene was very affecting, and I felt great regret at their parting.

One of the boys was the son of a Kootanais chief, and named by us Pelly, after the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company; the other was a son of one of the Spokane chiefs, and we called him Garry, after one of the Directors; they were about ten or twelve years old, both fine promising youths of equal age. As it is not likely we shall be recurring to this circumstance again, we may mention that the boys reached their destination, and were educated at the Missionary School. At the end of two or three years, however, Kootanais Pelly, after making considerable progress in learning, died; some years afterwards, Spokane Garry returned back to his own country with a good English education, and spoke our language fluently. These were the first Indians belonging to the Oregon territory ever taught to read and write; for which the praise is due to Governor Simpson.*

We return to our subject. Leaving Flathead

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* This boy, Spokane Garry, did not realise the expectations entertained of him on his return to his countrymen.—See Sir Geo. Simpson's "Narrative," page 144.

House early in the spring, with the furs of the past and the Snake returns, which had of necessity to pass the winter at that place, we commenced our voyage down Flathead River. This takes a long time on account of the intricate navigation; that river being shoal, and full of rapids, all the way down to Lake Callispellum—a small sheet of water so called after the tribe of that name, and through which the river passes. A little beyond the west end of the lake, we leave Flathead River altogether, as it continues its course to the right; our road led to the left, that we might avail ourselves of the portage (an overland carriage of some thirty miles) to Spokane House, and from thence by the same mode of conveyance to the Forks or mouth of Spokane River. There we arrived, after a voyage of 240 miles, on the 12th April, 1825.

The reader will here notice that there is no water communication leading either to or from Spokane House, navigable for any craft larger than an Indian canoe. Here I had the honour of an interview with Governor Simpson, for the first time, he being then on his way across the mountains for Rupert's Land. I made known to him my determination to leave the Columbia, and my intention of going to Red River Settlement to see that place. On mentioning Red River, the Governor observed to me, "If you are resolved on leaving the service and going to Red River, I shall have a situation there for you until you have time to look about you." I thanked his Excellency for the offer, and prepared for my journey.

At the entrance of Spokane River, Governor Simpson, chief Factor M'Millan, myself, my son, then eleven years of age, the two Indian boys, Pelly and Garry, together with fifteen men, all embarked on board of two boats, and set out on our way for the Rocky Mountains. The season was early, the weather fine, the grass already long, the trees covered with foliage, and the whole face of nature smiled; every countenance, too, beamed with cheerfulness: I alone was downcast. I had to leave my family behind, who had for years shared with me in the toils and dangers of my travels; this was to me a source of grief and anxiety, although it had been arranged that they were to cross over and join me the following year. On these occasions, the Company afford every facility to families leaving the country; and as it is impossible for women and children to undertake such arduous voyages in the spring of the year—owing to the cold, the high state of the waters, the deep snows in the mountains, and the general hurry and despatch at that season—families in going from one part of the country to another are provided with everything for their comfort and convenience at more favourable seasons. My family reached the mountains in the same autumn, and wintered on the height of land; they thence proceeding early in the spring, joined me in health and good spirits at Red River Colony in the summer of 1826.

But to return to the voyage, from our starting-point to the Rocky Mountains. This has not yet been noticed in our narrative; nor, as far as I know, been described by any person; so that our attention will now be more particularly directed to that part of Columbia as we proceed.

Having started, we passed on to the Kettle Falls, a distance of about 82 miles, which we may call the first stage of our voyage, our course being north-east, and the river full of rapids; the prospects all along were pleasant: woods, plains, hills, and dales, in endless succession. At the Falls, all craft ascending or descending the river have to make a portage, to pass that barrier. These Falls roll over the rocks in various places; they are not, however, more than ten or twelve feet high, and shift from place to place, according to the rising and falling of the water, and the position of the rocks; so that at all stages of the water, the impediments are pretty much the same, for as one place gets better, another gets worse.

This place is a great rendezvous for the natives during the salmon or summer season; but neither the concourse of Indians, nor the quantity of salmon killed at this place, are a tithe of the numbers taken at the Dalles, or at Ama-ketsa's camp in the Snake country.

At this place, the site of a new establishment, to be named "Colville," was marked out, close to the Falls. The situation of Colville has been extolled by many as a delightful spot; there is a small luxuriant vale of some acres in extent, where the fort is to be built, under the brow of a woody height: this is so far pleasant enough, but in every other respect the prospect on all sides is limited. The place is secluded and gloomy; unless the unceasing noise of the Falls in front, and a country skirted on the opposite side of the river with barren and sterile rocks and impenetrable forests in the rear, can compensate for the want of variety in other respects. If so, the place may, indeed, be called delightful; otherwise, there are very few places in this part of the country less attractive, or more wild.

From the Kettle Falls to the lower or Petit Dalles, the second barrier in our journey, a distance of twenty miles, the general course is N.N.W., the river very serpentine, but particularly so for the first six miles, where it forms irregular courses, and yet is smooth and free from rapids. At this place we had to unload, and carried our property over a portage of two hundred yards in length.

As we advanced, a little above the site of Colville, a small stream enters on the west side of the river Sunwhoyellpeatook or White Sheep River. This is the only river that enters the main stream till we reached the Petit Dalles, where the deep and compressed body of water rushes with great velocity through a narrow passage. Here are a number of cylindrical holes, which have been formed by round stones or pebbles, being kept whirling round by the current and the whirlpools, until they have in the course of time made holes of various sizes in the solid rocks; some of them are not larger than a snuff-box, while others are large enough to contain tons of water.

Leaving the Petit Dalles, we proceeded against a strong current until we had reached a distance of sixteen miles, general course north, where the Columbia receives, on the east side, the tributary stream of Flathead River, which we have already traced to its source. At its entrance, where it shoots over a ledge of rocks eight or ten feet high, which bars it across from side to side, it is fifty yards broad, and falls into the main river in one white foaming sheet. This river is sometimes called Pend d'Oreille, sometimes Callispellum; but it is more generally known by the name Flathead River.

Near to this place are several islands of various size; some of them are formed entirely of drift wood, and have enlarged year after year by accumulating quantities which drift down the river; others again are formed of naked rocks which stud the river in various places, interrupting the view and dividing the stream into various channels. As we rounded one of these high rocks one morning, against wind and swell, one of our boats was almost dashed to pieces and nearly upset; our escape was a narrow one, for the rocks stopped our approach, and we only reached the shore by the help of our companion boat. The east side of the river opposite to this is skirted by a range of high land, rendered remarkable by four conspicuous knobs, which show themselves at a distance; here the river is constantly shifting courses.

From the mouth of Flathead River we advanced through a rugged country, for the distance of twenty-four miles, in a northerly direction, without meeting any other impediment than a strong and rapid current. At the end of that distance, as we rounded a low point of woods, on the east side of the river, we came to the Kootanais, commonly called the M'Gillivray River; this latter stream is, at its entrance, double the breadth of the Flathead River, although neither so deep nor so long.

The Kootanais River has its source in the Rocky Mountains: in its westerly and meandering course it passes through a considerable lake, and some time before joining its waters with the Columbia, it shoots over a height of fifteen feet. The entrance of this river is rendered remarkable by having, on the south side, one of those delightful spots which man, in these wilds, is prone to admire; and on the left, the remains of a deserted Indian camp. It is rendered still more remarkable by a dike of round stones, which runs up obliquely against the main stream, on the west side, for more than one hundred yards in length, resembling the foundation of a wall; it is nearly as high as the surface of the water, and is clearly seen at low water. On the opposite or east side is a similar range, of less extent. These are evidently the work of man, and not destitute of ingenuity; we supposed them to be a contrivance for the purpose of catching fish at low water: they are something similar to those used by the Snakes during the salmon season. At the upper end both ranges incline to the centre of the river, where they nearly meet. If the object was to bar the river across, it was certainly a fruitless undertaking. On passing this barrier, the river makes a quick and lengthy bend to the west, and opens to more than its ordinary breadth, for a distance of ten miles.

At the elbow of this bend, on the north side, is a lofty mountain, opposite to which are a large and small island, delightfully situated. The banks are low, diversified with clumps of young poplars, birch, and alder, which give to the surrounding scenery a pleasing appearance. Here the general aspect of the country is agreeable; and we were fortunate enough to find as much level ground as we required to camp on for the night. This brings us to the lower end of the first lake, the appearance of which caused much joy.

In looking back upon the part of the river we have voyaged, the mind is lost in wonder how such a body of water, free from cascades, could have ever made its way through a country so rocky and mountainous. The river in most places is contracted by the rocky heights on each side, and its low bed makes it appear still more contracted than it really is. The view in most places is limited and gloomy: dark and impenetrable woods generally cover the whole declivity down to the water's edge.

To this part of Columbia, Nature has dealt out her favours with a sparing hand: scarcely anything was to be seen but the river beneath us, and the stern rocks and sombre wood above and around us on every side. Not the least traces of animal have we seen for some days past; equally scarce are the wild fowl; even insects and reptiles seem to have no place here—silence and desolation reign undisturbed. I could say of the few days past what I could not have said before for the last fifteen years—that I had passed a day and slept a night without seeing an Indian, or the trace of any human being: no wonder, then, that we should, after getting clear of so dreary a part of the river, have felt a sensation of relief on beholding the lake expand before us. This brings us to the second stage of our voyage, a distance of fifty miles.

At the entrance of the lake it has the appearance of a large river, with a high and conspicuous knoll overlooking the south-west entrance, which points out its first course—north-west for fifteen miles. During this distance a bold and abrupt range of high lands on each side confine the river between them. Immediately after the banks become low and the beach gravelly, along which are scattered here and there some small cedars and dwarf pines, and in one place a thicket of young firs remarkable for their green and thriving appearance.

At a point on the west side a number of figures of men and animals have been rudely portrayed on the naked rocks with red ochre; and into a large cavity, at a considerable height above high-water mark, a number of arrows have been shot, which remain as a menace left by some distant tribe who had passed there on a warlike expedition. The natives understand these signs, and can tell, on examining the arrows, to which tribe they belong.

On these rocks the high-water mark of former years is indicated by a streak on the stones, and by quantities of drift-wood lodged in the fissures and clefts of the rocks at a distance of more than thirty feet above the present surface of the water. Here the waters are, apparently at least, more productive than the land, for the salmon and other species of fish peculiar to the country sported about in every direction, while the land presented but little to admire. In some parts, however, the trees were of a good size, and not unfrequently spots of rich soil were seen in the valleys.

In these parts we perceived, as we sailed along, a remarkable whiteness on the rocks between the high and low water mark. In other parts, again, we noticed quite a different appearance: some of the rocks showed a reddish, others a greenish hue, not altogether displeasing to the eye. In the distance the general appearance of the country is very pleasing—green, luxuriant, and diversified by thick woods, with open plains, deep valleys, rivulets, and spots of rich pasture.

After the first bend, the course of the lake is due north, and its average breadth about two miles and a half; having a good sailing wind, we soon got through it. At the upper end it contracts to little more than a mile in breadth, and terminates in a course north by east; but its general course throughout is due north. This beautiful sheet of water is forty-two miles long.

Just as we had reached the extreme point of the lake we perceived in the edge of the bushes a thin curl of smoke rising. Taking it for the residence of some living inhabitant, we made for the spot, and there found two Indians squatted before a small fire, but without any lodge, or other shelter than the woods afforded them; one of them was elderly, the other a young man of about twenty years of age, who was suffering severely from a wound in the breast. On inquiring how he came by it, the old man, after some hesitation, related to us the following story:—

"We have been here," said he, "ten days. At first we were a good many persons; but my son," pointing to the wounded man, "had a quarrel with one of his comrades about his wife, after which the man went off, and my son's wife followed him, and we have not seen them since. My son then in a fit of rage for his wife shot himself, as you see, and I am taking care of him." From this it would appear that the inhabitants of the wilderness are subject to fits of jealousy. As soon as the aged father had related his son's misfortune, he began to cry and lament sadly.

They had applied nothing to the wound, but had probed it with a small sharp stick, round the point of which was tied a little of the inner rind of the spruce bark pounded very soft, which kept the wound running,—a painful operation, that had reduced the patient almost to a skeleton. Having nothing else, we gave him a piece of soap to wash the wound, and then left them. The wound was from a gun loaded with shot, which, as far as we could judge, had penetrated almost through the body; but from what I have already seen of wounds amongst Indians, I think it possible he might recover.

At the water's edge we saw and examined a birch-rind canoe of rather singular construction, such as I had never seen in any other part of the country, but used by the natives here; for I saw several of the same make when I passed this place two years ago. Both stem and stern, instead of being raised up in a gentle and regular curve, as is customary elsewhere, lie flat on the surface of the water, and terminate in a point resembling a sturgeon's snout; the upper part is covered, except a space in the middle; its length is 22 feet from point to point, and the whole bottom between these points is a dead level. Such craft must prove exceedingly awkward in rough water; and there is often a heavy swell in these lakes.

We have noticed that the lake terminated in a north-easterly direction, where we, of course, entered the river again. During several miles there were many sand flats, which during high water overflowed, and gave to the place more the appearance of a lake than a river; but the current decides the point in favour of the latter. Near to this place flows on the east side a little river which enters the parent stream through a low woody point, opposite to which, on the west side, is a very conspicuous triangular mountain. The country all round has a most savage and wild appearance. Having proceeded sixteen miles in the same direction as we left the lake, we came to the second, or upper, lake. Here it began to rain, and from rain turned to sleet, ending in a heavy fall of snow; and so very cold was the weather that the men were obliged to have recourse to their mittens and blanket coats: even then, we passed a very cold and disagreeable night.

Just as we had encamped, a stout elderly savage emerged from the rocks behind us. He appeared at first rather surprised, shy, and reserved; but soon recovering his presence of mind, became talkative, and gave us much information respecting the country, beaver and other animals, roads and distances; also some account of himself and the Indians of the place.

"My father," said he, "was a Kootanais chief; but, in consequence of wars with the Blackfeet, who often visited his lands, he and a part of his people emigrated to this country about thirty years ago. I am now chief of that band, and head of all the Indians here. We number about two hundred, and call ourselves Sinatcheggs, the name of the country; and here we have lived ever since. I have been across the land on the west, as far as the Sawthlelum-takut, or Oakanagan Lake, which lies due west from this, and can be travelled on foot in six days. I and several of my people have likewise been to the She-whaps, which lies in a northwest direction from this; but the road leading to the latter place strikes off two days' journey from this, and it takes eight days' travel to accomplish it. We have no horses on our lands, nor is the country suitable for them; we make all our journeys on foot. This part is well stocked with beaver and other kind of furs, and we have in consequence often wished for a trader among us. The lakes abound with sturgeon and other fish; so that we live well, and are at peace with all men."

Here the old man concluded his remarks, and told us that his people were then living about two miles up the river, where they were employed in hunting wild animals and catching fish; that his stumbling upon us was the effect of mere chance, he being at the time in pursuit of a wounded moose deer; but, on seeing the whites, he abandoned the pursuit, and came into our camp. We gave the sachem of the Sinatcheggs an axe, a knife, and some tobacco, and he took his departure highly gratified with his reception.

Notwithstanding the weather was cold and unpleasant, we made an early start, and soon afterwards entered the second lake in a north-westerly course for about ten miles. Everything around was dreary and winter like; and the tops of the highest mountains were covered with snow. The wind proving favourable, we hoisted sail, and proceeded over a clear sheet of deep blue water. On entering the lake, our attention was at once attracted by a number of white objects in the water, resembling at a little distance the appearance of men. On a nearer approach, we found nothing but stumps standing and leaning in every direction, having their lower ends immovably fixed in the sandy bottom.

Two years ago we passed this place in the night, and had great difficulty in keeping our boats from being either upset or broken by them, as they were thickly studded in the channel through which we had to pass. Near the middle of the lake we passed a prominent point of land on the east side, with a high bluff, which we called Cape Rock; opposite to which, on the west, the lake swells out into a considerable bay, where the course inclines more to the north. On the same side is a high peak, treeless on the top, and capped with snow: this peak marks the broadest part of the lake. Looking northward from this point, the lake appears very beautiful; but the view is interrupted by a lofty mountain, which at a distance appears to bar the channel across, and terminates the lake. We had no sooner arrived there than on looking back we saw plainly the lofty top of the triangular mountain passed at the upper end of the first lake.

This body of water is in general broader, and has a much finer appearance, than the other lake; but the shores are more rocky. Its length is about thirty-three miles, its breadth three miles, and it lies in the direction of north and south. As we sailed along, we perceived several small rivers or creeks enter it on either side; but none of them of a size to merit particular attention. The face of the country generally is varied, broken, and mountainous.

On one occasion our attention was directed to a small Indian hut close by the water, and a child about four or five years of age, endeavouring to make its escape into the woods, by climbing up the steep bank. As we approached the place, it began to scream out, and tried again to get up, but failed; at last, however, it made a successful effort, got up, and was out of sight in the bushes, before we could land. On jumping ashore, as we were anxious to see some more of the Indians, we speedily followed after, got hold of the little fellow and brought him back to the hut. All this time we saw nobody else; but had no sooner showed ourselves to be friends, and pacified the little urchin by acts of kindness, than an elderly woman made her appearance out of a cleft of the rocks, and after her two little girls crept out from the same hiding-place. We spoke to them, and gave them a few trifles; when the old woman ran off and brought us some roots and berries, which she laid down before us; we then shook each of them by the hand and parted good friends.

The natives we have seen in these parts are few and far between, and in their habits resemble wild animals; they seem to have no recognised camp like other Indians. If the good old chief told us the truth, that he was their pastor, or head, he has a very scattered and wretched flock.

From the lower end of the first lake, all along to this place, the country presents a varied aspect, and we not unfrequently saw delightful spots that will, at some future day, prove the comfortable abode of civilised man.

In taking leave of the lakes, we entered the river in the usual course of north-west. At the end of two miles we passed, on the east side, a cataract, which shot over a precipice some thirty feet high; the water was clear as crystal and as cold as ice. Near to the same spot is a fine thicket of stately cedars, which we called Cedar Grove. Five miles from Cataract Creek, we passed an island which, from having started several deer on it, we named Deer Island; it is more than half a mile in length, and formed entirely of driftwood, as appears from the outer edges of it: the force of the current has compressed the wood so closely and solidly together, that it seems to have been laid in tiers, as by the hands of man. The main body of the island has become one solid mass of decayed vegetation; out of which are seen growing pines, poplars, and a variety of trees, some of them measuring two feet in diameter. Yet much of the original wood of which the island was at first composed is still solid, and in a good state of preservation, although, perhaps, it had lain imbedded there for more than a hundred years, and the surface or sward, formed on the top from year to year, has increased the solid earth to the thickness of several feet. In one or two places we saw islands of this description beginning to be formed.

During the voyage we have generally omitted to notice the numerous islands scattered throughout the river, they presenting but little variety, for except those that are purely rocky, they are chiefly composed of drift wood. The immense quantities which float down the river yearly, either with the ice in the spring or during high water, are often obstructed in the channel by sunken rocks; or the wood itself getting entangled, compressed, and forced together by the current and ice, or fixed in the sandy bottom, forms a nucleus, which keeps accumulating until an island is formed.

In many places, notwithstanding the mountainous aspect of the country and rocky shores, the current for short distances is smooth, and free from rapids: from Deer Island to Otter Creek, a distance of eight miles, this is the general character of the river. But from the latter to a place called the Upper Little Narrows, there is a very dangerous place of more than a mile in length, lying in the direction of east and west, a distance of fifteen miles: the river there is full of rapids. Between Deer Island and the Narrows are to be seen numerous sandy flats, remarkable for the number and variety of shining particles—substances resembling different kinds of ores, lying scattered almost everywhere along the beach, and among the sand and rocks.*

In doubling one of many rapid points which almost everywhere arrest the progress of the voyageur, the body of water was so strong and rapid, that we failed with the paddle, setting-pole, and line four times, in our attempts to ascend, and only got up the fifth; we therefore named the place Point Try-it-again. At the head of this rapid we had to cross the river, where the force of the water was so great, that our boats were whirled round on the surface by cross currents, so that they were in the utmost danger of being swallowed up: one of the shocks was so sudden that all hands were unseated.

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* A kind of talc common in that part of America.

Within the distance of seven miles we passed eighteen strong rapids, crossed and recrossed the river (to avoid bad places) one hundred and twelve times, and passed in that distance sixteen cataracts, which poured their tribute into the parent stream.

Few places can present a more gloomy or perilous prospect to the voyageur than the Little Narrows; for about a mile the view is almost completely shut up between mountains and rocks; and in getting our boats through, they were tossed from side to side, leaving but little hope at times of their ever getting up without accident. At the head of this intricate passage, which we fortunately got over in safety, the river forms endless windings, for a distance of about ten miles; when it enters, on the east side, a considerable stream, which we have named Beaver Creek, from the ravages of that industrious animal seen about its banks. Here also the tracks of deer and elk were seen, and some wild ducks and geese.

From the Narrows to Beaver River the general aspect is diversified, from the hilly to the rocky and mountainous, the channel being more or less rapid, and the stones along the beach almost everywhere incrusted with a metallic substance resembling black-lead, which gives them a smooth and glossy appearance. Here also the shining particles we noticed some time ago have become more and more abundant; when the sun shines, they appear like bits of tinsel lace, and are so dazzling as to affect the eyes.

At the distance of twelve miles, in the usual course of north-west from Beaver Creek, there is a remarkable height on the east side of the river; it is partly covered with snow, and partly with numerous towering rocks, broken fragments, peaks, and serrated ranges, resembling the turrets, domes, spires, and steeples of a city in ruins. What stamps the impression of reality still more forcibly is the cloud of mist that floats above this imaginary city; and the longer we looked at it, the stronger was the illusion, so deceptive are objects seen with the naked eye at a distance.

Twenty-two miles beyond the City of Rocks, a fine river enters the Columbia, on the same side as Beaver Creek. The largest we have met with since passing the Kootanais River, I have named M'Kenzie's River, after my companion and fellow traveller of former years, M'Kenzie of Mayville. At its entrance, and on its banks, were numerous tracks of the beaver, moose deer, and other animals; fresh bear tracks were also numerous.

At a short distance above the M'Kenzie River commence the Grand Rapids, or Dalles des Morts. These Dalles are about two miles in length from end to end, in the direction of south-east and north-west; and at the head of them is an abrupt bend, forming the most dangerous part. Here the channel, which is scarcely forty yards broad, presents a succession of white breakers, and a portage of one hundred and fifty yards must be made, where everything but the boats has to be carried. At the bend or narrowest part of this intricate passage, the river appears to have forced a passage for itself through the solid rock; but the huge sides of the yawning chasm seem to threaten to resume their former position by closing up the gap.

In the portage, the road by land is no less difficult, and but little less dangerous, than the passage by water; yet the adroit voyageur disregarding all dangers, overcomes all difficulties. After three hours' labour we landed the boats safely at the upper end, paying but little attention to the objects around us. Here many have closed their career, and found a watery grave: here is to be seen a cross, there a solitary grave, to tell their sad but silent tale. Yet for all these warnings the boatmen heedlessly push on, as if nothing had ever happened to those who had gone before them!

A prospect more wild and dangerous than the Grand Rapids we have seldom seen: at the upper end is the spot where, in 1816, four of our men perished. On this melancholy place stands, near to the water's edge, a wide-spreading pine-tree, occupying the place of the weeping willow; and close by it is a lofty square rock, on which we inscribed their names. We then, in silence, turned our backs on the Dalles des Morts, a distance from the Lakes of seventy-five miles: this forms the fourth stage of our journey.

From the upper end of the Grand Rapids, our course leads due north; and here, a little after starting, we backed our paddles, and stood still for some minutes, admiring a striking natural curiosity on the east side. The water of a cataract creek, after shooting over the brink of a bold precipice, falls in a white sheet on to a broad flat rock, smooth as glass, which forms the first step; then upon a second, some ten feet lower down; and lastly on a third, somewhat lower; it then enters a subterraneous vault, formed at the mouth like a funnel, and after passing through this funnel it again issues forth, with the noise of distant thunder; after falling over another step, it meets the front of a bold rock, which repulses back the water with such violence as to keep it whirling round in a large basin; opposite to this rises the wing of a shelving cliff, which overhangs the basin, and forces back the rising spray, refracting in the sunshine all the colours of the rainbow. The creek then enters the Columbia.

As we rounded Point Curiosity, a name we gave to this place, we shot at a black bear, which although badly wounded, got into the woods, and we had no time to follow it. Soon afterwards we saw some deer, and fired several shots at them, two of them being killed on the spot. In these parts, the constant fogs create so much humidity that the air is always extremely damp; even in fine weather sportsmen must prime their guns anew, or they will have but a poor chance of killing much game: percussion guns would answer best in this climate. As we advance, the river assumes a smoother surface, and the country, for a short distance, assumes a more pleasing aspect.

Four miles from the Grand Rapids we passed a cluster of rocky fragments, which obtained the name of Castle Rock, from its singular appearance. Near this place we picked up several pieces of lead and iron ores; the stones lying along the beach were also variegated, and no less singular for their whimsical shapes and colours, than remarkable for a peculiar roughness of surface, resembling the rust of old iron or coarse sand-paper; others were coated with a crust like black-lead, nor have the shining particles among the sand and rocks diminished.

All the way from M'Kenzie's River up to Castle Rock the country is remarkable for its gloomy aspect, and the banks along the river for the number and variety of spangled or shining substances, which everywhere attract attention.

And here, while surrounded with so many novelties, one of our men, rather a green hand from Canada, was so much delighted with the spangled substances, that he fancied himself in one of the gold-mines of Peru; for he gathered together and bagged nearly a bushel of these shining treasures, saying to his companions that he would enrich himself by selling them in his own country for gold and silver.

At the distance of eight miles from Castle Rock is Egg-shell Island; this must be a great resort for wild fowl in the summer season, as we found great numbers of egg-shells scattered about the place. On the east side, and about nine miles from Egg-shell Island, a fine stream enters the river; the first we have met with above the Grand Rapids worth notice. Arriving at its entrance, we perceived some elk crossing it, when I and one of the men set off in pursuit of them; but we had to return, after a fruitless chase of more than an hour, tired and unsuccessful, with our clothes literally torn to rags. On our arrival, some of the voyageurs, in a jocular mood, called out, "We must name the river after Mr. Ross," and the name remained. Ross's River is deeper, but not so broad as M'Kenzie's, and it is a fine navigable stream for canoes.

On the same side as Ross's River, we came to a place resembling an amphitheatre, with galleries, boxes, and pit, as if cut out of the cliff by the hand of man. This huge structure hangs rather loosely and suspiciously over the side of the river, and appears so awkwardly supported, that we were rather alarmed to pass near it: this strange-looking place, which we named the Circus, is about twelve miles beyond Ross's River. Near to it were three Indian birch-rind canoes laying on the beach, turned upside down; but not a human being was to be seen about the place. Not far from the Circus, we passed Rapid Crôche, so called from its very crooked and serpentine appearance; and near to it Diamond Creek, a small stream remarkable for the brilliant particles along its banks. Though then small, yet if we may judge from the size of the channel, a great and irresistible body of water must discharge itself there at some season of the year; for its banks, which are low and flat, are covered with large stones, trees, and drift wood, which must have been hurled down by the force of the current.

Eight miles beyond the Circus, we passed a group of little islands, where beaver ravages were to be seen; from which circumstance we named them Beaver Islands. Here we saw some geese, and a few diving ducks, commonly called water-hens; we likewise saw two red squirrels, and some small butterflies, the first of the kind we had noticed during the voyage. At this place the mosquitoes were very troublesome, notwithstanding the weather was cold enough for blankets. A little distance from Beaver Islands, a very pleasantly situated small river forms the main stream on the west side; I named it M'Millan's River, as a tribute of friendship for James M'Millan, Esquire, formerly of Columbia. Floating down this river, we noticed numbers of black flies, large and small, called the snow-fly; we skimmed them off the surface of the water with our hands, and many of them still showed symptoms of life. Such is the dampness of the climate here, that the smaller insects have neither activity nor vigour to save themselves by flight, except in the sunshine. In fact, the state of the weather in these parts has a peculiar influence over the whole face of nature: in a dark day, everything appears in the most dismal light, whereas if the sun happens to shine, the rudest of Nature's works seem to smile and produce a strikingly agreeable effect.

From M'Millan's River, a distance of eight miles, we came to a considerable height, from which we had a rather pleasing prospect. This place I called Belle Vue Point. Here we had the first view of the Rocky Mountains, lying north-east, distant about ten miles; and rocky, indeed, is their appearance. Between the river we have just named and Belle Vue Point the surrounding aspect was strikingly wild and romantic; an endless variety of towering heights, rugged peaks, and snow-capped mountains everywhere studded the broken and barren surface.

After passing Belle Vue Point, the country was more agreeable, and the river also; but this improvement was but of short duration, for we had only time to pass a point or two when the aspect became gloomy, and the rapids and bad steps as frequent as ever. As we advanced and viewed the river ahead of us, it appeared to contract like the tube of a funnel, and lose itself in the mountains; we, however, no sooner advanced to where it seemed to terminate, than the mountains receded, a passage presented itself, and we again beheld the channel wide and navigable as ever, inviting us to advance.

Again and again were we encouraged, until we reached Crystal Creek, some two miles from Belle Vue Point; here, however, the mountains closed in so near to each other as to confine the view to the rocky heights on each side and the sky above us: and here, indeed, the abrupt turnings of the river seemed to preclude all hopes of any further progress; yet we persevered, and our efforts were crowned with success. For two days past we had been following these short windings, and doubtful points, where we could scarcely at any time see the course of the river for half a mile.

At last we reached a small opening, and were relieved, inasmuch as we could see about us. Notwithstanding the intricate windings, and mountainous state of the country, the river is by no means bad; nor are the rapids or other difficult passages to be compared, either for danger or difficulty, to many places we had already passed. We had no sooner passed this opening than the mountains closed in again upon the river, where the rapids and difficult places became more and more frequent; but the active and adroit voyageurs seemed to disregard all obstacles, and with paddle and pole alternately, set all difficulties at defiance.

The Canadians are clever voyageurs; in the worst places, when the steersman calls out briskly, "Tout à la fois: tout ensemble," giving a flourish or two with his paddle, the effort they make is seldom unsuccessful, and all generally ends well. At the distance of six miles from Crystal Creek, we arrived at the entrance of Canoe River, coming in from the north-west, and about forty yards broad at its mouth: this is the river I visited from the She-whaps, across land, in September, 1816.

Here the main river veers gradually round, from north-east to south-east, and marks the northernmost point of Columbia River. A little beyond Canoe River a rapid little stream enters on the east or mountain side, coming direct from the height of land, which we shall have occasion to mention more particularly hereafter: this stream I have named Portage River. Opposite to it, the Columbia spreads out, covering, during high water, a space of four hundred yards in breadth; but at low water it divides into three separate channels each about fifty yards broad: the eastern channel is the best, but all of them are shoal, and flow rapidly over a rocky bottom; here, however, the south channel spreads out, and finds its way among the woods, as the bank there is low. From Portage River the Columbia, in a south-east direction, skirts the base of the mountains all along to its source, a distance from our present position, following the circuitous course of the river, of one hundred and eighty miles, and it is navigable for boats more than half the way.

According to the rough calculations we have been able to make, this branch of the Columbia, in all its windings, from the Great Forks near Fort Nez Percés up to its source, may be considered 820 miles long. It offers a wide field to the mineralogist, and unlimited employment to the lover of natural history. Portage River, which is about thirty yards wide, enters the Columbia at right angles, and forms Portage Point. Here we landed, secured our boats, and prepared for our journey across the mountains; which makes the fifth stage of our route, and is a distance of sixty-eight miles from the Grand Rapids. And this terminates our voyage on the waters of the Columbia.

## CHAPTER XV.

Portage Point—Wild scenery—Forbidding prospect—The five tribes—Begin the portage—The walking-stick Journal—Hard day's work—Luxuries of the evening camp—Road described—Leave Portage River—Scenery—Portage Valley—Climbing the Grand Côte—Size of the timber—Encampment—Night scene—Punch-bowl Lake—Sister Creeks—Farewell to Columbia—Avalanches—Devastation—Giant of the rocks—Horses arrive—Road obstructions—The Hole—Athabasca—Length of portage—East side scenery—First establishment—North-westers and bark canoes—Jasper's house——Lapensée's grave—Solitary travelling—Fort Assiniboine—Exchange horses for canoes—The new road—Sturgeon River—The party described—Garments—Arrive at Fort Edmonton—Indians—Trade—A ball—Offensive dogs—Saskatchewan boats—Charming scenery—Fort Carlton—Hostile Indians—Agriculture—The swampy country—Crees—Fort Cumberland—Sturgeon—Trade—Gardens—The sun-dial—Domestic cattle—Lake Bourbon—Arctic land expedition—Franklin and Richardson—The country of frogs and mosquitoes—Grand rapid—Miskagoes—Winipeg—Mossy Point—Arrive at Norway house—Migratory habits of the warlike tribes of the plains—Views of the introduction of agriculture—Mr. Leith's bequest.

With the last chapter we closed our remarks on the water navigation of the Columbia, as far as Portage Point, or as it has since been named Boat-Encampment; the spot from whence I turned back two years ago. But before leaving this stage of our journey, I will make a few observations on this interesting place.

Here the spectator has on one side a picturesque view of most diversified scenery. The only opening that anywhere presents itself is on the south-west side; and looking in that direction, we saw the main stream before us; the upper branch flowing from the south-east on one hand, and Canoe River and a parting glance of the descending Columbia visible on the other. Turning round to the east, the view is abruptly checked by the mountains; not in a continuous range, but heights rising one above another, almost everywhere shrouded in a dark haze, which renders a passage over them extremely doubtful. Yet through this apparently inaccessible barrier the traveller has to make his way.

We shall now glance at the country intervening between Portage Point, the northernmost part of the great north branch, and Cape Clear Weather, the southernmost point of the still greater south branch of Columbia; where both rivers verge in the mountains, at a distance of some seven hundred miles apart. The figure of the country thus embraced represents a triangle, the base of which skirts the Rocky Mountains, and terminates in a point at the Great Forks, near Fort Nez Percés. The northern section is well wooded and watered; but the character of the southern quarter is arid and mountainous: yet, as a whole, it is a delightful country in summer.

Considering its extent, climate, animals of the chase, horses, and scalps, all these temptations hold out enticing prospects of booty to the marauding brigands east of the mountains; who, in consequence, visit it too frequently. It is the great theatre of war, and the land for horse thieves; which may account for the scanty population. If we leave out of the account casual visits of the War-are-ree-kas, the few mountain Snakes on the south, and the still fewer Sinatcheggs on the north, there are only five petty tribes resident in all this quarter: namely, the Kootanais and Selish, or Flatheads, at the foot of the mountains, and the Pointed-hearts, Pend d'Oreilles, and Spokanes lower down; the whole not mustering more than 1850 souls.

As we ascended the river, we saw but few traces of animals; but when we happened to go any distance into the woods, or from the river, fresh tracks were so frequent as to cross each other in all directions, particularly of the beaver.

Return we now for a moment to Portage Point, where we arrived at nine o'clock in the morning: such was our despatch, that we had no sooner concluded our voyage by water, and laid up our boats on land, than, in the space of an hour, our arrangements for the arduous task of crossing the mountains were completed.

With a load of ninety pounds' weight on each man's back, and each carrying his gun and blanket, we set out in a string one after another, on a narrow footpath across a low quagmire, overflowed in many places with a foot or more of snow-water. After proceeding for some distance, we crossed a low and wet woody point; then travelling nine miles in an easterly course, we again fell on Portage River; on the wet and stony beach of which we spread our blankets, and passed the night. Where Portage River enters the Columbia, the current for some distance is slack, but at our encampment it flowed very swiftly.

After passing a cold night, owing to the wet state of everything around us, we commenced our journey at daybreak. A plunge or two in the cold water was our morning dram, which we had to repeat more frequently than we wished: in short, our whole day was occupied in crossing and recrossing this impetuous torrent.

When the current proves too strong or the water too deep for one person to attempt it alone, the whole join hands together, forming a chain, and then cross in an oblique line, to break the strength of the current; the tallest always leading the van. By their united efforts, when a light person is swept off his feet, which not unfrequently happens, the party drag him along; and the first who reaches the shore always lays hold of the branches of some friendly tree or bush that may be in the way; the second does the same, and so on till all get out of the water. But often they are no sooner out than in again;

and perhaps several traverses will have to be made within the space of a hundred yards, and sometimes within a few yards of each other; just as the rocks, or other impediments bar the way. After crossing several times, I regretted that I had not begun sooner to count the number; but before night, I had sixty-two traverses marked on my walking-stick, which served as my journal throughout the day.

When not among ice and snow, or in the water, we had to walk on a stony beach, or on gravelly flats, being constantly in and out of the water: many had got their feet blistered, which was extremely painful. The cold made us advance at a quick pace, to keep ourselves warm; and despatch was the order of the day. The Governor himself, generally at the head, made the first plunge into the water, and was not the last to get out. His smile encouraged others, and his example checked murmuring. At a crossing-place there was seldom a moment's hesitation; all plunged in, and had to get out as they could. And we had to be lightly clad, so as to drag less water. Our general course to-day was north-east, but we had at times to follow every point of the compass, and might have travelled altogether twenty miles, although in a direct line we scarcely advanced eight. The ascent appeared to be gradual, yet the contrary was indicated by the rapidity of the current. After a day of excessive fatigue, we halted at dusk, cooked our suppers, dried our clothes, smoked our pipes, then, each spreading his blanket, we laid ourselves down to rest; and, perhaps, of all rest, that enjoyed on the voyage, after a hard day's labour, is the sweetest.

To give a correct idea of this part of our journey, let the reader picture in his own mind a dark, narrow defile, skirted on one side by a chain of inaccessible mountains, rising to a great height, covered with snow, and slippery with ice from their tops down to the water's edge. And on the other side, a beach comparatively low, but studded in an irregular manner with standing and fallen trees, rocks, and ice, and full of drift-wood; over which the torrent everywhere rushes with such irresistible impetuosity, that very few would dare to adventure themselves in the stream. Let him again imagine a rapid river descending from some great height, filling up the whole channel between the rocky precipices on the south and the no less dangerous barrier on the north. And lastly, let him suppose that we were obliged to make our way on foot against such a torrent, by crossing and recrossing it in all its turns and windings from morning till night, up to the middle in water,—and he will understand that we have not exaggerated the difficulties to be overcome in crossing the Rocky Mountains.

On the third morning, at daylight, we were again on our journey; but found our legs stiff and our feet sore after the fatigues of yesterday. The cold water had benumbed every joint and limb; it was with the utmost reluctance we could reconcile ourselves to plunge into this cold and impetuous torrent again, on getting up in the morning. But we had no choice; so we continued our route, although crossing *far* less frequently than before, until we had travelled three miles. At this place the mountains recede on one side, and on the other the country becomes lower, forming a valley, with a varied and beachy surface, but during the summer becomes an inland lake; over this valley we journeyed for about two miles further, when we arrived at the foot of the principal hill, commonly called the Grande Côte. Here we leave the river to the left, our road leading to the right.

At this place Portage River is scarcely twenty yards broad; but the width of the channel and the traces of ravages left by the water among the woods and rocks show that a powerful and impetuous body of water descends here at some season of the year; yet the general aspect is altogether improved, and the country more open on the west, and more pleasing than many places we had passed further down.

At nine o'clock in the morning we commenced the ascent of the Grande Côte, and continued to ascend in a thousand sinuous windings till five o'clock in the afternoon; we then found ourselves on the top of it, a distance of about three miles in length, but scarcely a mile and a quarter in a straight line. At first the ascent was gradual, but it increased in difficulty as we advanced; and this was the more keenly felt as we became fatigued and tired of the task. In some places the ascent was so precipitous, and the short and intricate turnings so steep, that we had to get up them by clinging to the branches that stood in our way, and we not unfrequently had recourse to our hands and knees; when this failed we had to be assisted by each other, dragging first the man, and then his load up, before we got to the summit. None but a voyageur or Indian can comprehend how men with heavy loads could accomplish such a task. And much greater would his surprise be if told that at certain seasons, when the snows are off the ground, loaded horses ascend and descend this route as far as Portage Point, and that few accidents ever occur.

But although we were now on the top of the Grande Côte, or Bell Hill, let not the reader imagine that we had reached the highest part of the Rocky Mountains; for we saw heights towering above heights, until their distant summits were lost in the clouds. I therefore considered that the place we now stood on was about half way from the base of the Grande Côte to the top of the highest rock we saw above us. The forest scenery, even at this height, imparted variety, and relieved the eye from the dull monotony of rocks and glaciers which everywhere surrounded us. At the base the woods were thick, and the trees measured from two to two-and-a-half feet in diameter; and all along the ascent the trees, although not so numerous as below, were yet about the same size; but on the top I found only a few that measured more than a foot in diameter.

On the summit of the Grande Côte we found the snow eight feet deep, and there we encamped for the night. When travelling over snow, it is always customary for travellers to clear a spot for their encampment; but the men were so worn out after their day's labour, that a little indulgence was shown them on the present occasion. After throwing the loads off their backs, instead of setting them to clear away the snow and pitch the tents as usual, they were ordered to lay a tier of long green wood on the surface of the snow; upon which, after being covered over with wet faggots and brushwood, a blazing fire was kindled and we prepared for rest. Travellers in severe weather, in these parts, generally sleep with their feet towards the fire; it was so with us, as no regular encampment was made. Each rolling himself up in his blanket, lay down on the surface of the snow, with his feet to the centre, forming a circle round the cheering fire; every one stuck his shoes and socks on a forked stick to dry, in order to be ready for an early start. This being done, sleep soon sealed up our eyes.

We were not, however, long permitted to enjoy a bed of snow in peace; for hardly had we slept, when one poor fellow, who had placed his feet in rather doubtful proximity to the fire, was awakened by feeling it approach too near his toes. Thus warned, he started up, exclaiming, "Le feu! le feu!" In a moment we were roused; but only to witness a scene of confusion, mingled with jests and shouts of laughter. It appeared that the fire had sunk down a considerable way, owing to the melting of the snow under it, and thus formed a miniature crater, over which feet and blankets, as well as shoes and socks, had experienced a too warm temperature. On jumping up, some, not aware of their position, slid down, with an easy descent, into the fiery gulph; but, fortunately, the melted snow which they carried down with them, and the activity of their comrades, who hastily dragged them up, prevented anything more serious than a fright. Some, however, were slightly burned; but none received any serious injury. The best part of the joke was, that some one threw the poor fellow's bag of stones, which he had collected along the way, and on which he set so much value, into the fiery pit, and the distracted man had a hard scramble to rescue his fossil treasures. Before we had got all our odds and ends together, it was broad daylight; we, therefore, set out on our journey, promising never again to encamp on the surface of the snow.

Leaving now the Grande Côte, we advanced on the morning crust at a quick pace, through a broad level valley, thickly wooded with dwarf pines, for about six miles in an easterly direction, when we reached what is called the great height of land. At this place is a small circular basin of water, twenty yards in diameter, dignified with the name of a lake, out of which flow two small creeks. The one on the west side discharges itself into Portage River; that on the east joins the Athabasca River at a place called the Hole. This elevated pond is further dignified with the name of the "Committee's Punch Bowl," in honour of which his Excellency treated us to a bottle of wine, as we had neither time nor convenience to make a bowl of punch; although a glass of it would have been very acceptable. It is a tribute always paid to this place when a nabob of the fur trade passes by.

Here I made a halt, turned round, and took a last farewell of Columbia, with all its tributaries; and in doing so, I felt for the first time that I was in one country, and my family in another. Notwithstanding the many anxious days and hair-breadth escapes I had undergone on the west side of the Rocky Mountains and on the shores of the Pacific during a period of fifteen years, I felt at this moment a pang of regret at leaving it.

From Punch Bowl Lake we hastened on through the same valley till we reached, at the end of fourteen miles, the Grand Batteur; there we put up for the night, not forgetting, however, to clear off the snow, and place our fire on the solid earth. The road over which we journeyed to-day was not bad; but, as an instance of its desolation, one solitary mountain hawk was all we saw of the feathered tribes. On our way hither, our attention was drawn to various parts, in consequence of occasionally hearing a loud and rumbling noise, not unlike that of distant thunder, or rather volcanic irruptions; and on looking in the direction from whence the noise proceeded, we always saw a dense volume of smoke rising up like a cloud of dust in dry weather. This, after some time, we discovered to be the sliding down of immense bodies of snow and ice from the overhanging cliffs and precipices of the mountains, sweeping along in their descent, rocks, stones, trees, and everything that happened to lie in the way.

One of those avalanches had fallen on the right hand of the valley through which we were journeying. It lay spread over a space of 540 paces, and extended far out into the valley. The height from which this sheet fell could not be less than 1500 feet. We, therefore, did not consider it safe to be travelling under such awful heights, nor did we select any such places for our encampments at night.

Not far from this place is a very singular rock, placed on the shoulder of another. This huge and conspicuous block we named the Giant of the Rocks. The bold and rugged features of the prospect here defy all description.

With the morning dawn we left the Grand Batteur, passing a chilly and disagreeable night, from the mountains of snow around us: the snow had, however, diminished here to about twenty inches. We had only advanced a few miles, when we had the good fortune to meet, at Campment d'Original, two of the Company's men from the nearest trading post, on the east side of the mountains, with a band of light horses for our service. This meeting, by men tired and worn out with fatigue, was a source of much joy; and we were on the look out for them, for horses are always provided, at both spring and fall, for the purposes of transport, and to assist the foot-passengers and families.

On meeting the horses, we breakfasted, mounted, and continued our journey. Here the men were relieved of their burdens, so that all went on cheerfully until we reached the end of the portage, at a place called the Hole, from the depth of the water at the edge of the bank, the Athabasca being unfathomable there. Course east; distance twenty-two miles.

Punch Bowl Creek, swelled at last to the size of a moderate river, runs along through the same valley, parallel to the road we travelled, and discharges itself into the Athabasca at the Hole, as we have already noticed, where the broad side of that river abruptly met us on emerging from the woods. It lies in the direction of north and south, and flows in the latter course. It is a fine stream, sixty-five yards broad, and skirts close along the base of the mountains. Our road thus far was much obstructed by fallen timber, through which the fire had passed, lying pell mell on the ground, imbedded in ice and snow; to get over or through which was just as much as our horses could do. Crossing the Athabasca at the Hole, we journeyed along the east bank for some miles, until it unites at right angles with another river of nearly equal size, which enters on the east side. This stream we crossed also, and encamped, after a hard day's travel, at the Grande Traverse.

We had now left the Athabasca portage behind us, and got clear of the mountains, and computed the distance from Portage Point to the Hole at eighty-five miles. On reaching the Hole, the mountains abruptly terminate in a uniform range, and present a bold and stupendous wall of great elevation. On the east side, the country at once opens into a wide and boundless prairie—the land of buffalo, and the hunter's paradise. Of the different passes and portages through these mountains, with which I am acquainted, the Athabasca, which we have just crossed, is perhaps the longest, as well as the most gloomy and difficult; owing chiefly to the water in Portage Valley. The Kootanais Pass, the route by Hell's Gates, or the Valley of Troubles, are all less tedious, if taken in the proper season, and the obstacles they present are more easily overcome than those of the Athabasca; yet the Athabasca itself can be travelled from one end to the other on horseback, with the exception of one or two steps in the Grande Côte.

On decamping from the Grande Traverse, we pursued our journey for ten miles in a northerly direction, until we reached the first post, called the Rocky Mountain House, where we left our horses, and prepared for taking the paddle. On approaching this establishment, situated under the brow of the mountain ridge, we had anticipated a gloomy place; but the very reverse was the case. We advanced, from the water's edge, up an inclined plane, some two or three hundred yards in length, smooth as a bowling-green, and skirted on each side by regular rows of trees and shrubs, the whole presenting the appearance of an avenue leading to some great man's castle, which had a very pleasing effect. Here, however, we found no lordly dwellings, but a neat little group of wood huts suited to the climate of the country, rendered comfortable and filled with cheerful and happy inmates; and what gave to the place a cheering aspect was the young grass, forming a pleasing contrast to the snow-clad heights around.

Here my old friend Joseph Felix Larocque, Esq., an old north-wester, and formerly of Columbia, was in charge; and with his usual kindness, treated us to a dish of very fine tiluemg, or white fish, the first of the kind I had ever seen. The white fish here is considered, in point of quality, in the same light as salmon on the Columbia, the finest fish in the country; and many an argument takes place whenever parties east and west of the mountains meet, as to which is the best. The Columbians, as a matter of course, argue in favour of the [illegible]-lock, or salmon; while the adverse party advocate as strongly the titameg, or white fish. Delicious, however, as we found the titameg, there was nothing either in the taste or flavour to induce me to alter the opinion I had formed. I give the preference to the good old salmon, as the king of all the piscatory tribes on either side of the mountains.

After two hours' delay we said good-byes to Mr. Larocque, and, embarking in two canoes, took the current down the Athabasca. Wherever there is a north-wester in this country, the birch-rind canoe is sure to be found. Although boats would have been far more safe and suitable for our purpose, yet we had to embark in those fragile shells to shoot a dangerous stream. After proceeding for some distance, we put ashore at the first lake, merely an enlargement of the river; but here everything is dignified with the name of lake.

The country lying east of the mountains being generally better known than that on the west, we shall be less minute in our details, and touch as seldom as possible on things already known.

Starting at an early hour, we passed through the first lake, and found at the end of the second, another establishment, named "Jasper's House," still smaller, and of less importance than the first, so called in honour of the first adventurer who established it; but now in charge of a man by the name of Klyne, a jolly old fellow, with a large family. Attached to this petty post are only a few indolent freemen: not an Indian did we see about the place. Here we breakfasted, spent half an hour, and again took the current.

From Jasper's House the river widens and becomes larger; the current strong, and rapids frequent. Their appearance admonished us to proceed with great caution; yet with all our care, we broke one of our canoes, and before we could get to shore our bark was half filled. Ten minutes' delay, and we were again on the water; but had not gone far before a second disaster sent us ashore. At this place a wooden cross was stuck up in the edge of the woods, and on examining it, I found it marked the grave of one of the old Tonquin adventurers noticed in the first part of our narrative. On it was cut, in still legible characters, "Olivie Lapensie, from Lachine, drowned here in May, 1814."

Leaving Lapensie's Island, the thick woods on our left closed in to the beach, and cast a dismal gloom on the place; but on the right, the country presented a more open and level aspect. If we except the few individuals seen at the establishments, not another living being did we see, either civilized or savage, till we had reached the Company's third establishment, called Fort Assiniboine; a petty post erected on the north bank of the river, and so completely embosomed in the woods, that we did not catch a glimpse of it until we were among huts, and surrounded by howling dogs and screeching children. At this sylvan retreat, there were but three rude houses. Two white men, and six half-breeds, were all the men we saw about the place, and there was not a picket or palisade to guard them from either savage or bear; which said a great deal for the peaceable state of the country. This mean abode was dignified with the name of fort; and with the presence of a chief factor. It is right to observe, however, that Fort Assiniboine was but a new place, in process of building.

Here we exchanged our canoes for horses, and leaving the Athabasca, we prepared to travel by land, intending to strike across the country in a south-easterly direction for the Saskatchewan River; after an hour and a half's delay, we shook hands with McKintosh, crossed the river, mounted our horses, and set off on what was called the new road. In company with us, were some of the half-breed stragglers of the place, who found it convenient to join us in our march; and a strange and grotesque medley our cavalcade formed. Our new companions called themselves half-breeds, but in my opinion there was not a drop of white blood in their veins.

The road formerly in use between the Athabasca and Saskatchewan River, in this place, being always very wet and boggy at this season, it was judged advisable to try some new path, and on it we set out; but after some days' travel, we had little reason to congratulate ourselves, for the new road proved decidedly worse than the old. The wet weather, together with sleet and snow, added to our difficulties.

At any dry season of the year, however, when the snow is off the ground, the road we took, with the exception of the fallen timber, would be preferable to the old pass. In addition, however, to other difficulties, three deep and miry rivers cross both the old and new path; where, instead of our horses carrying us, we had to drag them, as we had perhaps more interest in saving them than they in saving us. So soft and miry were the bottoms and banks of those watercourses, particularly the last one, called Sturgeon River, that we had to dismount and get over it with our horses following us. Afterwards our way lay over a high level plain, where we made a halt to refresh our worn-out animals, and brush up ourselves a little before arriving among strangers.

While marching, our cavalcade resembled an Indian scouting party more than anything else; for except at camping time, the party was never together. During the day, every one rambled about as his fancy led him, either in quest of game or pleasure. On all such excursions the Indians are to be seen occasionally, gazing on the top of some eminence or conspicuous place, like spies on the look out; and they seldom approach the camp otherwise than at full speed, as if bringing some pressing intelligence, and generally amuse themselves with a few notes of some barbarous song. Thus the hardy veterans perambulate the most gloomy wildernesses, and are always at home, and from day to day and from meal to meal, depend upon chance for their meat, drink, and clothing; yet they are, in their condition, the happiest of all mortals.

The horses east of the mountains, which we have hitherto seen, are lazy, and without spirit; but hard usage and scanty fare may in a great degree account for their jaded appearance. Our followers tell us, that all the worn-out and otherwise useless horses are collected together and sent to what is called the "reserve," for the use of the Rocky Mountain pass. The California breed I found as superior to those of Columbia as the latter are to those we see here. Hence we might ask the question, Is there more Spanish blood in them? or does the horse deteriorate the further he goes to the north?

Having noticed the quality of our horses, we next come to our riding accoutrements. The bridle, if we may so call it, consists of a long thong of raw hide dressed in the country fashion, called Atscacha or Cubaress, some thirty feet long. One end of it is tied round the animal's lower jaw, the other, after running through the rider's left hand, passes over the animal, and drags on the ground some fifteen feet behind the horse. This is awkward when numbers are riding together among the whites, but pleasing to the Indian; because every jerk as the party moves along, causes the animal to rear and frolic about: this is looked upon as a mark of mettle, and shows a spirited animal, and the oftener the jerk is repeated by tramping on the atscacha, the more highly is the rider flattered, as it never fails to draw from him a smile of approbation. Awkward as the atscacha is, it comes finely into play when the rider has occasion to dismount, to shoot, or follow game, to tie his horse, or catch him when at liberty: in all these cases, it is far more handy than our bridle.

Next comes the saddle. It consists of a piece of dressed leather, made up in a peculiar fashion, and stuffed with grass or the hair of animals; with a broad and fringed crupper. The saddle is not unfrequently trimmed and handsomely ornamented with quill work, and the saddle cloth outdoes all the rest in tawdry ornaments; yet such is the construction of the Indian saddle, that it never fails to injure the horse's back: every horse carries his saddle-mark or sore back, as long as his legs carry him. Lastly, a piece of wood bent and shaped to hold the foot, supplies the place of the stirrup. The reader may now fancy the appearance of such a cavalcade parading the wilderness. Thus mounted, we generally started with the rising and encamped with the setting sun. Our horses being refreshed, we resumed our journey, and proceeding over the plain at a good speed soon reached Fort Edmonton, pleasantly situated on the north bank of the Saskatchewan River, a distance of one hundred miles from Fort Assiniboine.

Mr. Chief Factor Rowan, formerly a partner of the North-West Company, and long in the country, presides here as the chief man of what is called the Fort des Prairies, or Saskatchewan districts. By him we were received with open arms. Gentlemen in the service are in the habit of receiving all strangers, whether of high or low rank, connected or not with the Company, with courtesy and affability. From motives of interest all Indians visiting the establishments are welcomed with kindness, and treated as children by the traders. The habit becomes familiar to them, and they take a pleasure in holding out the right-hand of fellowship to all comers and goers.

On the evening we reached the fort, Mr. Rowan, according to custom, when a great man arrives, gave a grand ball in honour of Governor Simpson, at which all the people about the establishment, high and low, old and young of every class, attended, dressed in their best attire. I had often heard the females of Fort des Prairies celebrated for their attractions; and I must say that report had not in the least degree exaggerated their accomplishments. Modest and unassuming, they dressed well, danced well, and made a good show of fineries. In short, the whole entertainment was conducted with much good taste and decorum.

I had seen very few places in the country where domestic arrangements, either within doors or without, were conducted with so much propriety as at this place. At almost every other post, men and women are to be seen congregating together during the sports and amusements of the men, and the women are often seen flirting idly about the establishments, mixing among the men at their several duties. But it is not so here: I did not notice a woman, old or young, married or single, going about the place idle; all seemed to keep at home, and to be employed about their own affairs. The moral and pleasing effect was such as might be expected, and reflects great credit on Mr. Rowan and on his family.

Fort Edmonton is a large compact establishment, with good buildings, palisades, and bastions, pleasantly situated in a deep valley. An extensive and profitable trade is carried on with the warlike tribes of the plains—Blackfeet, Piegans, Assiniboines, and Crees. All these roving bands look up to Mr. Rowan as their common father, and he has for more than a quarter of a century taught them to love and to fear him. Attached to this place are two large parks for raising grain, and, the soil being good, it produces large crops of barley and potatoes; but the spring and fall frosts prove injurious to wheat, which, in consequence, seldom comes to maturity

Adjoining the cultivated fields is a very fine level race-ground, of two miles or more in length;

horse-racing being one of the chief amusements of the place during the summer season: and here we may observe that Fort des Prairies is not only celebrated for fine women, but for fine horses. Mr. Rowan, a man of active habits, good humour, and fond of riding and racing as a pastime, keeps some of the best horses the country can produce, and we were favoured with a specimen of them. I rode round the race-ground a chestnut sixteen hands high, and very spirited. I must not fail to observe, after what has been already stated on the subject of horses, that many of them, both for size and muscle, were as fine animals as ever I had seen in the country; from which we were convinced that those belonging to what is called the "reserve" are not to be taken as a criterion for the whole country,—an instance how easily a careless observer might be deceived; for had we not seen Mr. Rowan's fine stud, we should have left the Saskatchewan with a very unfavourable opinion of the horses.

An abominable custom is very prevalent among the traders on this side the mountains, and Edmonton is entitled to its own share of odium—the keeping so many starving dogs about the establishment in summer for their imaginary services in winter. There were no less than fifty-two snarling and growling curs; and they are said to be very useful and profitable animals.

Formerly, during the days of opposition, dogs might have been useful as runners, for the purpose of securing furs; but the peaceable state of the country now affords both time and convenience for the hunters to bring in their furs, and they do so: yet the dogs are still kept. During by-gone days the emulation among men for dogs as runners was so great that all their hard earnings were spent on them; and the tawdry paraphernalia required to ornament a first-rate train was as expensive as it was foolish: the wife might go without her blanket; but the husband must have his dogs, and the dogs their scarlet ribbons and their bells!

The custom, however reprehensible in this point of view, is equally so in others; for the nuisance of their presence in a fort is beyond endurance: they are the terror of every woman and child after dark. Nor can a stranger step from one door to another without being interrupted by them; and, worst of all, the place is kept like a kennel: in wet weather the horrid stench is intolerable.

These animals are in general of the wolf-breed, and are said to be vigorous and long-winded: a hundred miles a-day is a common journey for them. They are not generally reared about the establishments, but purchased from the natives for a mere trifle when young: when trained, they sell among the whites as high as five pounds sterling—double the price of a horse—and sometimes higher, according to fancy.

From Edmonton a brigade of boats makes a trip to York Factory and back once every year, carrying out the annual stock of furs, and bringing back the supplies required for the trade: this trip generally takes four months and a half to perform. We had to wait the spring arrangements, and before they were completed fourteen days had elapsed; at the end of that period, however, the flotilla, consisting of twelve barges, started with us on board; and we enjoyed a very pleasant voyage down the broad and swift Saskatchewan.

The boats in this quarter are considerably larger and stronger built than those in use on the Columbia. New boats here will cost twenty-five pounds sterling. They are propelled with oars, are roomy and comfortable, and carry from eighty to one hundred pieces, of a hundred pounds weight each. We descended this delightful stream with high water, fair wind, and full sails; the river being smooth, and free from rapids, but not in all places free from sand-bars. The land on each side rises gradually from the water's edge, and recedes as gradually back to the height of the last bank in a green undulating surface of hill and dale, to a considerable distance; then the country opens finely to view, presenting a plain of almost boundless extent. This place has neither the bold and rocky shores, nor the wild and mountainous aspect, of Columbia, but has been well termed the land of prairies—a land teeming with buffalo and deer, lakes and wild fowl; and for diversity of landscape, or beauty of scenery, few countries can equal—none surpass it. We continued our voyage until we reached Carlton: general course, east; distance, three hundred and eighty miles. We occasionally observed on the heights, as we sailed along, some straggling bands of Indians, but met with none of them.

Carlton House is built on the south bank, about one hundred and fifty yards from the water side; behind which is a rising ground, which commands the place. This establishment is next in extent and importance to Edmonton. It was at this time, however, undergoing a thorough repair, and had a very unfavourable appearance. The river, which is here broad, and the opposite side agreeable, presents a most delightful prospect in front. The south side, however, as well as the east and west, have nothing to boast of: high ground, covered with dwarf poplar, confines the view.

Detached bands of the same warlike tribes who frequent Edmonton trade also at this place; but furs are rapidly declining. The trade is not considered profitable; and the Indians are not at all times friendly. The Crees alone, who inhabit the country to the north, are quiet and friendly; those on the south are brigands. In summer a guard by day and a watch by night are indispensable; and the hostile visitors have been known to scalp some of the whites within a hundred yards of the fort gate.

Carlton, like many other places in this country, has too often changed masters to be what it ought to be—a compact and formidable establishment, so necessary where hostile Indians frequent. The palisades are neither straight nor strong, two very great faults in fortifying against Indians; and over the front gate is a paltry sort of bastion, or block-house, in which few would venture to fire a pistol. Altogether, the place had neither strength nor beauty to recommend it; and at the time we arrived ten resolute Indians might have taken it with the greatest ease.

There are, however, some good cultivated fields, which, with moderate industry, are said to yield abundant crops of barley and potatoes. Wheat grows here, and hops have been raised with great success; the gardens also produce good returns of onions, carrots, turnips, and cabbages. And here I noticed the best root-houses I have seen in the country. It is pleasing thus to witness the fruits of industry and progress of civilisation in the savage wilderness. Among the associations of this place many stories exist, and many funny anecdotes are told; but as we do not profess to give a history of the place, but merely a remark or two on it, we shall notice but one. A gentleman, in preparing for his rambles and amusements out of doors, set about making a fancy carriage in-doors, and, the better to guard the work from injury and the varnish from stains, he would have it done in one of his private rooms; but, in doing so, he unluckily forgot to notice that the door, which admitted the materials piecemeal, would not let out the vehicle as a whole! So there it remained—a ludicrous *miscarriage*.

After a stay of four days we left Carlton; and, if we except the kindness of our good old friend Chief Factor Stuart, we saw nothing else about the place, either to awaken admiration or lessen the pleasure we felt on leaving it to resume our voyage. Some distance from Carlton, as we descended the river, the high lands and wide-spreading plains gave place gradually to a country less and less pleasing to the eye; although the stream itself increases in magnitude, and is smooth and free from rapids. This unfavourable change may be considered the commencement of what is called the Mis-Keegoe or swampy country—a land of lakes, morasses, and quagmires. As we descended, we fell in with a small band of Crees; and being the first camp of Indians I had seen in this quarter, I naturally drew a comparison between them and those I had been accustomed to west of the mountains. To me the contrast appeared very striking: the former, humble and abject, approached us with a bland smile, and cringing familiarity;

whereas the rude Columbians never accost the whites but with an air of imperious contempt, which is natural to them.

The Crees have none of that stern and forbidding look peculiar to some tribes west of the mountains: the open and pleasing smile of familiarity is in their countenances. They are broader built, larger about the shoulders, have broader faces and larger feet than the lank Columbians; but they are not so straight, have an awkward gait, and stoop forward when they walk. The only article these poor creatures offered us for sale was a few small bags of feathers—an article I had never seen for sale among Indians before. From what we could learn, this part of the country is almost ruined in the more profitable article of furs, and most animals of the chase are getting further off every day; which circumstance has thrown the natives almost entirely on the produce of the waters for their living. The further we advanced the more gloomy, wet, and swampy the country became, until we reached the next halting-place, called Cumberland House. General course, north-east; distance from Carlton, two hundred and sixty miles.

Fort Cumberland is situated at the south end of Sturgeon Lake, where fish of that name is taken in great abundance; they are very fine and well-flavoured, although small in comparison to those caught on the Columbia; the largest generally taken here not exceeding seventy pounds. This establishment is large and tolerably well built, with a handsome dwelling-house, having glass windows, and what is still more uncommon in these parts, a gallery in front—the only instance of the kind I have yet seen in the country. Here James Leith, Esq., one of the oldest partners of the North-West, and senior chief factor in the Hudson's Bay service, presided as chief manager of the department. The trade of the place is, however, fast dwindling away to nothing; but in proportion as furs and animals of the chase are decreasing, agriculture seems to be increasing, and perhaps eventually the latter may prove to the natives more beneficial than the former.

In addition to the cultivated fields, we have to notice here the cheering prospect of domestic comfort. The introduction of domestic cattle from the colony of Red River gives a new feature of civilisation to the place. Here are two fine milch cows and a bull, and more are expected. In addition to these, other proofs of industry and comfort are manifest. A neat kitchen-garden, which furnishes an ample supply of vegetables, adorns the place, in the centre of which stands a sun-dial neatly cut and figured; the latitude of the place, 53° 57′ N., being marked on it.

Cumberland is, however, a gloomy place. Here we found the advanced party of Franklin's northern expedition waiting for orders. After a week's delay, we embarked to pursue our voyage.

The river, as we descended, loses much of its majestic appearance, owing to the bends it takes in its course; which led us round almost to every point of the compass, until we made Lake Bourbon, commonly called Cedar Lake, from the timber found along its shores. Here the first adventurers from Canada built an establishment called Fort Bourbon, which gives the name to the lake; but no traces of a fort now exist: it also denotes the extent of the discoveries made by the French, on the line from Montreal, prior to the taking of Quebec by the English in 1759.

This lake, although not very large, is subject to a heavy swell, owing probably to the water being shallow. The west side is rocky and high, with wood all round it. All the lakes in this quarter produce abundance of white fish; but they are not all of equally good quality. In some the fish are much larger, firmer, and of superior quality; and this is said to be one of them.

Just as we got out of Lake Bourbon, we met Captain Franklin and Dr. Richardson on their overland Arctic expedition, making all the haste possible to join their friends at Cumberland. We breakfasted with them; and after passing about an hour together, bade each other good-bye, and parted; they starting for the west, and we for the east. This lake led us into Cross Lake, from thence we soon reached the Grand Rapid, where a portage had to be made, at the foot of which the great

Saskatchewan loses itself in the wide-spreading Winipeg. The whole route, from Cumberland to this place, some twenty-five or thirty leagues, is low boggy ground, and goes under the general appellation of the Swampy Country.

The Grand Rapid is the only bad step in the Saskatchewan, from Edmonton to Lake Winipeg. Here we fell in with another small party of the Cree nation, called Mis-Keegoes or Swampies, employed in killing sturgeon, which appeared to be of the same size and quality as those of Sturgeon Lake. These Indians were civil and kind, but badly clothed, and appeared very poor; having something to eat, there was a smile of contentment on every countenance. The females were partly clad in European articles; but the garments of the men were of the produce of the chase.

From the Grand Rapid we coasted along the west side of the barren and rocky shore of Lake Winipeg. In this range there is a jutting point, or peninsula, which runs out boldly for some considerable distance into the lake, and is called Mossy Point; the voyageur often doubles this point with apprehension, as there is no way of getting on shore to save either boats or cargoes in case of a storm, and it is at all times exposed to the fury of the waves. Mossy Point is therefore called the Cape Horn of Lake Winipeg. After clearing the point, we coasted along until we reached our next halting-place, at the north end of the lake, called

Norway House. General course, east; distance from Cumberland, two hundred miles.

From the source of the Saskatchewan to this place, a distance of some nine hundred miles in length, the natives in former days were very numerous; as much so, as they are now the reverse. The north side of the river is occupied principally by the Crees, who, of all the Indians, were once the most numerous and powerful; being superior in individual intelligence, and distinguished alike for sagacity and mildness of disposition. Of this vast and powerful tribe, the scanty remains are in a condition as abject and wretched as their forefathers were independent and happy. Their wilderness scenery is still the same; their mountains, lakes, and rivers present the same aspect as they did centuries ago; and their prairies and forests are green as ever, while the wretched inhabitants are fast dying away.

The country on the south side of the river, all the way to the Missouri, is inhabited by a number of mixed and roving tribes, bold in war, and wild as their own native lands; and, with the exception of the Blackfeet, Piegans, and Assiniboines, who still retain their national character, they are little better known than by name. With regard to the actual number of any one of these tribes, or of the whole of them taken together, it is impossible to form any correct estimate; nor even can the boundaries of territory which each tribe claims as its own, be strictly defined.

When I was on the Missouri, I was told that the Blackfeet and Piegans who frequent that quarter, mustered together fifteen hundred lodges; and while passing through the Saskatchewan, I have been also told that those of the same tribes who visit and trade there, mustered one thousand lodges; but those of the Missouri and Saskatchewan mix together. Now allowing six to each lodge or tent, the aggregate number would be fifteen thousand five hundred individuals.

We have noticed on our route the commencement of agriculture and the introduction of domestic cattle at Cumberland House. From Edmonton down to Carlton, and far below, a range of five hundred miles, the country and climate invite the husbandman and the plough, and if the system now introduced be followed up with energy and success, the natives will doubtless profit by it; so that a remnant of that almost extinct, and degraded race, may yet be saved; for the Crees are a mild, docile, and half-civilised people. But the introduction of agriculture, however beneficial to the natives, must eventually prove ruinous to the interests of the Company, as by it the Indians will be taught habits of industry and attachment to a locality, and learn from example and experience the useful lesson that the cultivation of the soil is a more certain resource than the chase. And when once they are drawn by motives of interest and gratification to farming, they will be useless to the

Company in a commercial point of view; for the Indians are the sinews of their trade. What a noble and praiseworthy instance of self-denial we have in the conduct of men sacrificing their own interests to benefit others! We, therefore, wish the principle thus begun may be carried out and become general, not only on the Saskatchewan, but everywhere else throughout their territories. There is but one inference to be drawn, namely, that it has been introduced chiefly to benefit the natives and the laudable undertaking will no doubt, in the end, be crowned with a successful result.

As Mr. Leith of Cumberland, one of the warmest hearted and most philanthropic gentlemen in this or any other country, emphatically observed to me, while talking about the poverty of the Indians and the introduction of agriculture among them, "It is a plan introduced at the eleventh hour; but better late than never." I saw at once he was a man of feeling, and a friend to the Indian; and I showed him a few hasty opinions that I had thrown together on the subject. We then compared notes, and met each other's objections by a comparison between the natives west and east of the Rocky Mountains. After some further conversation, Mr. Leith opened his mind to me freely. Indeed, I could see that if he did not alleviate the condition of the natives, it was not the will but the power that was wanting. He was a man well advanced in life, of strict integrity, and of a religious turn of mind.

"The fur trade in these parts," remarked he, "is dwindling away to nothing: the returns even now scarcely cover the expenses; and shall we, after ruining the country and the natives to enrich ourselves, leave no other memento behind us but desolation and death? Half a century ago, this country was rich in furs and animals of the chase, the natives were numerous, independent, and happy; but now, alas! natives, and riches, and happiness have almost disappeared from the face of this and other parts of the country." "And where," continued he, "are all those among ourselves, who basked in the sunshine of a lucrative trade during that short period? Gone, like the natives themselves, to the land of forgetfulness; and with scarcely a solitary instance of one who did not outlive his means; so that nothing now remains of all their labour under the sun." I inferred at once, from what he said, although he expressed nothing more than I have stated, that he intended to do something for the destitute natives.

The year after this, Mr. Leith left the country for the last time and went home; on his way out, I happened to meet him at Norway House, and we journeyed together to York Factory. Some years afterwards we learned that he had left by his will* 10,000*l.* sterling for the religious instruction of the Indians.

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* See Appendix.

NOTE.—After a lapse of ten years, and after protracted litigation, the trustees of Mr. Leith's will were enabled, in the year 1848, to set apart £10,000 towards the endowment of a bishopric in Prince Rupert's Land.

We have annexed an extract from the will for the information of our readers; leaving with them a decision on the many conflicting opinions respecting the intentions of the testator. His benevolence and desire to Christianise the Indians are placed beyond doubt.

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## EXTRACT from the Will of JAMES LEITH, ESQ., of York Factory, Hudson's Bay (late of Torquay).

"I give, devise, and bequeath the remaining moiety or half-part of my lands, heritages, personal estate, and effects not hereinbefore disposed of by this my Will, unto my brother, the said William Hay Leith, and his heirs, the Lord Bishop of London for the time being, the Reverend the Dean of Westminster for the time being, and the Governor and Deputy-Governor, for the time being, of the Hudson's Bay Company, upon the trusts, and for the ends, intents, and purposes following: that is to say, upon trust that the said William Hay Leith and his heirs, the Lord Bishop of London for the time being, the Dean of Westminster for the time being, and the Governor and Deputy-Governor, for the time being, of the Hudson's Bay Company, as aforesaid, do and shall with all convenient speed convert the whole thereof into money, and lay out and invest the same in their names in the public stocks or funds of Great Britain, at interest, and do and shall, from time to time, expend, lay out, and dispose of the interest, dividends, and annual proceeds arising therefrom, in such manner as to them, or the majority of them, shall seem most desirable and advantageous for the purpose of establishing, propagating, and extending the Christian Protestant religion in and amongst the native aboriginal Indians in that part of America formerly called Rupert's Land, but now more generally known by the name of the Hudson's Bay Territory. I beg here to remark, that I do not consider the neighbourhood of a colony a fit place for the commencement of such a work; but I wish it to be understood as an observation only, as I must leave it to the above-mentioned Trustees to act according to their own opinions, guided by existing circumstances; and I trust they will do so as men of honour and understanding."

Will dated 20th February, 1835.

Testator died 19th June, 1838.

Will proved by the Executors in the Prerogative Court Canterbury, 11th August, 1838. Property valued under £9000.

# CHAPTER XVI.

Nelson River—Route to York Factory—Norway House—Climate—Great rendezvous—Governor Simpson—Annual councils—The fur trade—Remarks on the present system—The Governor's unlimited power—General remarks—My own final arrangements—Retiring servants—Leave Norway House—Qualities of our boat's crew—Physical deformities—A canoe hero—Account of his life—The voyageur's paradise—More words than work—Gloomy prospects—Dreary shore—Useless hands—Spider Islands—Poplar Islands—The storm—Narrow escape—Stormy Island—Squalls—Second storm—Gale on the lake—Boat aground—Danger—Confusion—Boat high and dry—The stormy night—Beren's River—The lop-stick—Grand view of the lake—Cat-Fish Creek—Dog's Head—Anticipations—Plans and projects—Story of a night's adventures—Devout voyageurs—Saints invoked—The solemn vow—The mysterious lights—The two channels—Grindstone Point—Drunken River—Arrive at the mouth of Red River—Lake Winipeg and its feeders—Navigation—Start for the Metropolis—The Public Road—Image Plains—Currency—Frog Plains—Civilization and Barbarism—Geographical Position—Speculations—Fort Garry, the Metropolis—A day in Red River.

We have noticed our arrival at Norway House, situated at the northern extremity of Winipeg, where issues the Nelson River, a stream of considerable magnitude, running, in a north-easterly direction, through a rugged rocky country, and falling into the sea at Port Nelson, in Hudson's Bay. Although a number of large and small streams fall into Lake Winipeg, yet the Nelson River is the only outlet from it, and is one of the routes to York Factory, but not the one generally followed by the voyageurs. The other, and the common route, is by descending this river to the distance of about twenty miles, and then ascending a small stream, which falls into it, as far as the height of land named the "Painted Stone," from certain figures carved and painted on it by the Indians, and where they formerly left some offerings to propitiate the deity of the place. On the east side of this height of land there is a chain of small lakes, out of which Hay's River takes its source, and, after passing through a barren uneven country intersected by some lakes and rivers, discharges itself into the sea at York Factory, in latitude 57° 2′ north, and longitude 92° 36′ west.

In the neighbourhood of Norway House there is a small river, which, according to report, was entered, during the time of the French, by a trader of the name of Perrault, about the year 1740, and named by him Pointe du Nord. It was afterwards called Rivière aux Brochet, or Pike River, from the abundance of these fish found in its waters; from which circumstance, also, the first establishment here was named Fort Brochet, and bore that name until a few years ago, when it was changed from

Fort Brochet to Norwegian Point. A number of Norwegians were hired by the late Earl of Selkirk, and were sent to that point for the purpose of clearing the woods and making a winter road to York Factory, but the project was found to be impracticable, and was therefore abandoned; hence the place was called Norwegian Point, and from Norwegian Point the factory is called Norway House.

During the year the place was by accident burnt to the ground, and at the time of my writing it lay in ashes. Preparations were in progress for rebuilding it on a more extensive scale, a little further down the river, on a rocky point, near to a place called the Play Green Lake. I should not be surprised if another name is given to the new establishment, for the people of this country are whimsical in giving new names to old places, and think little of changing them. Vegetation here dares hardly raise its head; the gleams of summer—if, in these forlorn regions, there be any summer—are rapidly chased away by the blasts of autumn, which again as rapidly flee before the storms of winter. The soil seldom produces anything in perfection.

Norway House is a place of considerable business and bustle during the summer season. It is the great inland rendezvous of the fur trade in this quarter. Here the people and returns of all the trading posts belonging to the Company, from Lake Superior on the south, the Rocky Mountains on the west, and the Frozen Ocean on the north, are collected together once a year, on their way to York Factory. Norway House would, therefore, be a fit place for a missionary station. Although people from all quarters muster here, yet none of those scenes of carousing and fighting, for which Fort William and other places were so celebrated, disgrace the meeting of friends. Peace, sobriety, and good order have put an end to those demoralising scenes which formerly disgraced human nature in this country. There are likewise but few of the French Canadians now in the service: those favourite children of the north-west school.

This brings us to the fur trade, the all-absorbing pursuit in the country over which the Company holds sway. These territories may be divided into four great sections,—the northern and southern departments of Rupert's Land, the Columbia District, and the King's Posts, as they are called; divisions each of them ample enough in extent for the territory of a crowned head. Once a year the Governor-in-chief, as the superintending officer is styled, generally makes his tour through the greater part of these wild dominions, holding his annual council at the head quarters of each department, and assembling round him, on each occasion, all the commissioned functionaries, the factors and traders within convenient reach. There the business of the departments is investigated and the requisite appointments are made; in short, it is there that the various arrangements are settled for conducting affairs at the different posts within their jurisdiction.

Few men in this country ever possessed such authority as does Governor Simpson, the Company's present representative; and none, we believe, ever gave more general satisfaction. Courteous in his manners, and active in his habits; gifted in a high degree with the power of self-command, and above all with a keen discernment of character; he appears eminently fitted by the union of these qualities for the commanding station which he so ably fills.

The extent of country over which Governor Simpson presides, stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific: there is no place in all the vast wilderness that he has not visited; every spot in it is known to him; there is scarcely a native but at some time or other has experienced his smile and his liberality. His fostering care has been over all.

We have paid some attention to the working of the present system in all its parts, and it does not appear to us, under all circumstances, that a change in any way could be made that would hold out a prospect of improving the trade or bettering the condition of the natives; everything seems to be done that can be done; therefore, any change from the present mode of governing the country might do more harm than good: even the monopoly itself, if removed, might be ruinous to the aboriginal inhabitants. It has been said that all monopolies are illegal restraints on freedom; to this general rule, however, there are exceptions. The monopoly is the best guarantee the natives of Rupert's Land have that the country will not be the prey of lawless strife; unless it were placed under the fostering care of a good and vigilant government.

It not unfrequently happens that the Council meets at other places, as well as at head quarters; indeed, wherever it is convenient for the Governor to attend. The Council of the northern department was held at Norway House this year, instead of at York Factory. During the sittings, which only occupy a few days, no other business is attended to; but the Council no sooner breaks up, than matters of minor importance are looked into. Each factor, trader, and post-master then sets about preparing and forwarding the business of his own especial charge.

When the public business was over, the Governor sent for me, and I repaired to his room. He received me courteously, according to his custom. After some conversation, he adverted to the subject of my remaining in the country, and continuing my former pursuits. "If you remain in the service," said he, "you shall have the entire management of the Company's affairs in the Snake country guaranteed to you for a certain number of years, with a liberal salary." I tendered my thanks for his handsome offer, but declined accepting it, urging as a reason that I had already twice tried the fur trade, and had twice been disappointed in my expectations; and, therefore, if experience was worth anything, I ought not any longer to reject its warnings; but, above all, I urged as my strongest motive for leaving the service, the necessity of retiring to a place where I could have the means of giving my children a Christian education, the best portion I could leave them.

After a short pause, the Governor observed, "Well, although you are determined on leaving the service, I am still disposed to be your friend: what can I do for you?" I answered, "Your Excellency has always been a friend to me, and if you are still disposed to add another favour to those I have already received, grant me a spot of land in Red River, that I can call my own, and I shall be very thankful." "Your request shall be granted," said he, "and the Company, in consideration of your exertions and success in the Snake country, are disposed to add something to it." On this occasion, I had every reason to be satisfied. He sent for the chief accountant, and ordered him to draw up a deed for a hundred acres of land, free of all expense, which he signed, handed to me, and we parted.

At Norway House we had to remain for more than a week, before the bustle of public business was over; and another week almost passed before we could get a boat's crew mustered, out of the invalid class ejected from the service. All the infirm and superannuated servants of the Company are taken from the different posts and left at Norway House, to be conveyed to their respective countries; or they are allowed to take up their abode in Red River. It happened this year that several of the invalids were destined for Red River, and very anxious to get on. Hearing that I was on my way thither, rather than wait the Company's regular conveyance they applied for a passage with me, and promised to work their way. I looked at them for some time, and certainly as far as appearances went they seemed to be worthless. "What can you do?" asked I of one of them. "Sir, I can do anything: I can steer, row, and sail; I have been brought up to the voyage." "And you," said I to another, "what can you do?" "I have been a steersman for five years," replied he. "And you," pointing to a third, "what have you been?" "We are all boatmen," was his reply. Indeed, they boasted so much of what they had done and could do, that I overlooked their age, and took six of them at their word. So we prepared to leave Norway House. In our company was a Mr. Bird and his family, which augmented our number to twenty-seven persons; all of whom, as well as myself, were bound for the same destination, and had taken a last farewell of the service. Embarking, therefore, on Lake Winipeg, we turned our faces towards Red River, hoisted sail, and proceeded on our voyage.

And as it may be interesting to the reader to know something of the character of these superannuated sons of the wilderness, we shall sketch them. In the first place, then, three of them were able to help themselves, if not others; but as for the other three, their day was gone by: all of them were poor, more or less mutilated, infirm, and clogged with large families. But they were, nevertheless, very talkative, and independent in their way—North-Westers to the backbone; they had long yarns to tell of their past lives, as all voyageurs have, and were full of life and spirits.

Of this motley crew, we shall notice some striking peculiarities in the more aged and experienced of them: one was blind of an eye, and lame from having been frost-bitten; another was a cripple from the same cause; and a third had lost his thumb by accident. The last of this trio, the patriarchal head, had reached the wrong side of seventy years; and his wife, from infirmity, walked on crutches; but the froward old man, still active for his age, was as waggish and thoughtless as a youth of fifteen.

One day, while in a jocular mood, the old man began to talk over his past life: it was full of adventure, and may appear amusing to others, as it did to us. I shall give it, as nearly as I can, in his own words.

"I have now," said he, "been forty-two years in this country. For twenty-four I was a light canoe-man; I required but little sleep, but sometimes got less than I required. No portage was too long for me; all portages were alike. My end of the canoe never touched the ground till I saw the end of it. Fifty songs a day were nothing to me. I could carry, paddle, walk, and sing with any man I ever saw. During that period, I saved the lives of ten Bourgeois, and was always the favourite, because when others stopped to carry at a bad step, and lost time, I pushed on—over rapids, over cascades, over chûtes; all were the same to me. No water, no weather, ever stopped the paddle or the song. I have had twelve wives in the country; and was once possessed of fifty horses, and six running dogs, trimmed in the first style. I was then like a Bourgeois, rich and happy: no Bourgeois had better-dressed wives than I; no Indian chief finer horses; no white man better-harnessed or swifter dogs. I beat all Indians at the race, and no white man ever passed me in the chase. I wanted for nothing; and I spent all my earnings in the enjoyment of pleasure. Five hundred pounds, twice told, have passed through my hands; although now I have not a spare shirt to my back, nor a penny to buy one. Yet, were I young again, I should glory in commencing the same career again. I would

pend another half-century in the same

fields of enjoyment. There is no life so happy as a voyageur's life; none so independent; no place where a man enjoys so much variety and freedom as in the Indian country. Huzza! huzza! pour le pays sauvage!" After this *cri de joie*, he sat down in the boat, and we could not help admiring the wild enthusiasm of the old Frenchman. He had boasted and excited himself, till he was out of breath, and then sighed with regret that he could no longer enjoy the scenes of his past life.

The life of this hero may serve as an index to that of the others: their history was of a similar tenour. Their long-winded stories were of little use in propelling our boat through Lake Winipeg. Their habits of indolence and thoughtlessness, which but little agreed with the character they had given of themselves, could not be overcome. Nothing could stimulate them to perseverance. They could smoke, sing, and rehearse the most fabulous adventures of their own lives; but they could not guide the helm, ply the oar, or trim the sail: so that we had to creep along the barren and rocky shores of Winipeg. We have given our readers a brief sketch of the life and habits of an old voyageur, and a true picture of our crew.

It would, however, be unfair to judge all the voyageurs by the example of poverty and depravity before us. Instances are not wanting of the old and retiring voyageurs leaving the country hale and hearty, with their pockets lined with the fruits of industry, and their character untainted with vice.

All this time our bark was speeding her way to the south. We had started with a sail wind; but it soon died away, and we had to ply the oar under a hot sun, and got on but slowly. Our course lay along the eastern shore, whose character is low and rocky. Not a harbour or creek invited the tiny craft to a friendly shelter until we reached the Spider Islands, a small rocky group lying out in the lake, ten miles from our starting point, where we found a safe and convenient harbour. These small islands, although very little higher than the blue lake that surrounds them, shelter the voyageur from every wind.

From Spider Islands we steered our course across a broad traverse for Poplar Islands, a distance of ten miles more. Here the channel, narrow and intricate, passes between a cluster of rocks and the main land. This place we reached under easy sail, a little before sunset; but instead of encamping there, as we ought to have done, we undertook at that late hour to cross another still broader bay, stretching to a place called Colony Point. We had soon reason to regret our imprudence; for we had scarcely gone half a mile, when the sky grew red, and the wind, veering from north to west, blew a gale, and forced us into the bay. Here nothing was to be seen before us but a chain of rocks, over which the breakers rushed with a violence that threatened instant destruction. Our boat speeding through the water, and the sun setting at the time, added to our terror.

At this moment I perceived on our right something like an island; but we were then passing it. Pointing to the object, I called to the man at the helm to make for the island. "Impossible," said he; "the boat will swamp." "Swamp or sink," said I, "there is no other hope for us." Calling a man to the sheet, which I was then holding, I sprang back to the helm, and brought up the boat almost broadside to the wind, in order to gain the island; but, in doing so, we had a very narrow escape: two or three heavy waves breaking over us, almost sent us to the bottom. I still kept her head for the island, as a last resource; but the crew seconded my endeavours very feebly: they lost all presence of mind, and, in their confusion, let go the sail! What followed was a struggle between life and death. Those men who had but a short time before boasted so much of their skill and prowess among lakes, now abandoned their posts and began to count their beads and cross themselves: only one man stood at his duty; yet Providence favoured us, and we reached the island in safety. It proved so small, that the waves from each side met in the lee with such violence, as to threaten us with instant destruction. We got on the rocks with the utmost difficulty; and fortunate it was, for had we run into the bay, no earthly power could have saved us.

I had now a specimen of the skill of my crew. They were all boatmen a few days before; but when I reminded them of their boasting, they justified themselves by saying, "We have had more experience in canoes than boats;" adding, however, "we never had a narrower escape." So boisterous was the weather, that we were kept prisoners on the island for two days, before we could venture on the water again. I need scarcely say that there was an end to all boasting. As soon as we had left the island, and resumed our voyage, I reminded my men of their late conduct, to prepare them for another time; but they did not half like it. The youngsters—even the women—teased them. But the poor fellows were completely humbled, and tried to avoid the subject. It put an end to all self-conceit, for after that we had less talk and more work.

After leaving our rocky retreat, the coast continued in appearance much the same as before, here and there marked with jutting points and bays, with a low beach composed of sand and gravel. The bays, although not large, form in their circuit many miles in length. In order, therefore, to save time and diminish labour, we steered in a direct line from point to point. Notwithstanding the narrow escapes we had met with by venturing too far out, my men were very anxious to avoid as much as possible the fatigue of the oar; and the canoe hero exclaimed, "There is as much difference between the nimble paddle and the drawling oar as between youth and old age." Most voyageurs in this country are as averse to boats as they are partial to canoes, and as awkward in the former as they are adroit in the latter.

The third day after leaving Stormy Island, as we were gliding across a bay from Beren's River to Pigeon Point, with a light breath of wind, scarcely sufficient to indicate the quarter from whence it came, the sky clear and weather fine, we were warned of danger by the appearance of a dark cloud and heavy gale coming from the west. It approached us with a noise like thunder, and with the quickness of lightning. The placid surface of the lake around us was, in an instant, turned into a sheet of fire, leaving us scarcely a moment to prepare for it. The gale struck the boat, and wheeled her round. Such was its violence, that the men were thrown down from their seats, and the boat driven to the bottom of the bay, where it lay among the rocks and stones, high on the beach, without our receiving any other injury than that of a fright; for on approaching the shore, the boat stuck fast on a sand-bar, till one or two heavy waves passed over her, when with the next she fortunately floated, and carried us high up on the beach, where we effected a landing. The moment the boat struck on the bank, the confusion was equal to the danger, wives grasping their husbands, husbands their children; but no one thought of the boat, the only thing that could save us.

When the wind had abated and the water subsided to its natural level, we found ourselves more than thirty yards from the water's edge, high and dry. Here we had to pass the night, fireless, sleepless, and shelterless, under a torrent of rain; and the floating of the boat next day took us six hours. This affair taught us to avoid all traverses; and the old fellows, thankful for their deliverance, took to their oars in good earnest, fully determined to keep along shore. Near the mouth of Beren's River, opposite to this place, the Company have a trading-post. In passing it, however, we saw no Indians. Here are also a few small islands, which give to this part of the lake a pleasing effect: on one of them a fine tall pine, trimmed into a may-pole, with its broom head, was conspicuous at a distance. One of my men, pointing to it, observed, "That's a lop-stick I trimmed eighteen years ago."

Pigeon Point, and all the vicinity, is well clothed with pine timber; but in other respects the rocky aspect continues, and the land is very little higher than the water. Yet from this position we had a good view of the lake, where it is at its greatest breadth, I should say about thirty-five miles, and it spreads out towards the west like an ocean. But the water is very shallow, the bottom rocky, and the beach full of stones. When the wind blows from the west, sailing is difficult, so that we got on exceedingly slow, taking three days from Pigeon Point to Cat-fish Creek; which, under favourable circumstances, we might have done in as many hours. Cat-fish Creek is a safe little harbour; I should say one of the best on the lake. Here we encamped for the night, being our twelfth day on the lake. A light breeze springing up, we sailed before daylight, and were soon at Rabbit Point; and from thence crossed a deep bay to a place called the Dog's Head. The lake becomes narrow in this part; the east side still more rocky and barren, with stunted pines; and the west side, for the first time, sufficiently near to show a rugged and broken surface, with a bold and rocky shore.

All these huge rocks and solitary islands afford dry and safe halting-places to numerous aquatic birds.

At the Dog's Head we considered ourselves out of all danger, the land on either side being within our reach; so we encamped in a snug little harbour, just large enough for our boat, and no more. We had no sooner put up for the night, than the thought of soon reaching their destination so cheered and animated the crew, that they passed the evening cracking their jokes and forming new plans and projects for enjoying life in Red River. One observed, "I will have my house built with double rooms;" another, "I will have my rooms ceiled and painted." It was really amusing to hear men without a shilling in the world enjoying life in their airy dreams, where nothing was real. One of the party related a night's adventures in this place, a few years before, in going with a boat from Fort Alexander to Jack River. His account was as follows:—

"We encamped at dusk one evening in this place; but the little harbour not proving safe, owing to the direction of the wind, we took supper, and then embarked again to look out for a place of greater safety. We had scarcely got out on the lake, and the sail up, before the atmosphere became overcast; the thunder was heavy, lightning flashes were frequent, and the night was very dark. We tried with all haste to get back to land again; but before we could get the sail down or the boat turned, the wind shifted and blew a gale from the land, accompanied with a deluge of rain. In this moment of peril we took to our oars, in the hope of being able to regain the land; but all our endeavours proved fruitless: the state of the weather prevented us from using our oars to advantage; some of us were pulling backward as often as forward. At length no alternative remained but to submit to the mercy of the winds and waves; and unfortunately both were against us.

"From the appearance of the opposite shore before dark, we considered that we could not have been more than five or six miles from it; but from its bold and rocky aspect, to have approached it with the wind that then blew would leave us little hope;

to hoist sail and keep to the right, to avoid the rocks, was equally dangerous, for in that case, nothing but the open lake was before us; rocks and islands were everywhere around us.

"Circumstances, however, decided for us: the boat, no longer able to resist, was every moment in danger of being swamped; so we resolved on hoisting sail: it was with great exertion that we got it half-mast high, and then keeping the boat to the left as much as possible, we preferred to run the risk of the opposite shore to the open lake on the right. Some baled out the water, while others kept a sharp look-out, which amounted to nothing; for except the lightning flashed, no one could see another in the boat, and we every moment fancied we heard the rush of waves dashing on the rocks ahead of us. Some said they saw the rocks, and called to prepare for the danger: death stared us in the face.

"In the midst of this confusion a strange phenomenon appeared: a meteor of fire, resembling a lighted candle, settled on the left end of the yard-arm. Supposing it to have been fire communicated by the lightning, we secured our guns under the covering; this done, another light settled on the right end of the yard, and immediately afterwards another showed itself on the top of the mast. The lights were rather pale, and of a reddish hue. All the three continued bright and steady for more than half an hour, without shifting; nor had the rain, the thunder, or the lightning the least effect on any of them. At length they dropped off and disappeared: first that on the left, then the one on the right, and lastly, the one on the mast-head.

"This extraordinary appearance so terrified us that we could scarcely utter a word; when suddenly we were startled by the boat entering among bushes, where it soon afterwards grounded. Grasping the bushes, we held fast till daylight brought us relief. In our anxiety to keep among the friendly bushes, we thought of nothing else but self-preservation; and while thus engaged, the agitation of the water and working of the boat unshipped the rudder, which we lost, as well as two oars and some articles of clothing. The wind still continued to blow hard, but the thunder and rain moderated.

"In our adventures we had only reached the opposite side of the narrows, not more than six miles from whence we started; although we had been tossing on the water a great part of the night, and expected we had been driven at least thirty miles, and that we were in the middle of the lake: we must have been turning round and round. And that saved us; for had we been driven on shore fifty yards to the left of where we were, instead of willows we must have come in contact with bold naked rocks; or, had we been some three hundred yards further to the right, we must have missed the opposite shore of the narrows altogether, and found ourselves out in the open lake, where we might have been driven fifty miles without meeting with land. On either hand our case would have been hopeless.

"When daylight disclosed to us our situation, we had every reason to be thankful, for the stem of the boat was within twenty yards of the rocks. But the three lights frightened us the most. Some said it was two of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, guarding the Virgin Mary; others, that the appearance was ominous, and presaged that three of us would be drowned; while some said that only three out of the nine who were in the boat would survive the storm. We then knelt down, took our rosaries, and ran over our Ave-Marias and Paternosters; praying, some to one saint, some to another: I prayed to the Virgin Mary. This done, we made a solemn vow, that if we lived to see a priest we would have a grand mass offered up as a thanksgiving to the Virgin Mary for our miraculous deliverance."

Here I interrupted him, and asked which of the saints he thought saved them. "The Virgin Mary," replied he; "and I have always been anxious to get to Red River to perform my vow and get a grand mass said before I die: some of the others have already paid the debt of nature without seeing a priest, but I hope to be more fortunate." And this ended the story of his nocturnal adventures, which he said he never could forget as long as he lived.

Vows of this kind are always religiously observed by old voyageurs. As to the three tapers, I have more than once witnessed the same phenomenon when sailing in dark nights in stormy weather, but never observed the lights settle on either the mast or yard-arm, except during storms of thunder and lightning; and although the flame appeared fully as large and bright as that of a burning candle, yet it seemed to me to throw no light, for the atmosphere round it was always observed to be dark, although the object appeared to us bright. Is the light, then, communicated by the lightning, or is it an ocular deception? We should like to see this strange appearance more fully explained.

From the Dog's Head, hoisting up sail, we soon reached a place called the Loon Straits, where a cluster of islands destroys the appearance of the lake, which is here divided into two leading channels; one of them, running in a south-easterly direction, points out the line of communication for Montreal through the great chain of lakes; the other, to the south-west, directs the traveller to Red River. From the Loon Straits, where there is a good harbour, we crossed over to Grindstone Point, on the west shore; so named from the quality of the stones found there. These stones, although inferior to those imported from home, are, nevertheless, considered a good substitute, and are frequently used: their cheapness recommends them. At this place the character of the rocks seemed to change: instead of the granite found on the east side, freestone, limestone, large flag-stones hard as flint, and others friable, occupy the west side. This place is very rocky, and much exposed to a heavy swell. While we put on shore to breakfast, one of the hands related that soon after he came to the country, the boat in which he had taken a passage started from the Loon Straits in the night, and having a sail-wind, some of the hands lay down on the boat to sleep; on arriving at the point, however, they put on shore for breakfast. Here, one of the men not answering to his name when called, the others, thinking he was still asleep in the boat, went to throw some water on him to waken him; it was then discovered that the unfortunate fellow had fallen overboard during the passage, and was drowned.

Leaving Grindstone Point, a place destitute of harbour or shelter, we continued our course along the west side of the lake, which is thickly wooded with spruce and red pine. Passing the grassy narrows, we reached the sand-bar, which runs obliquely almost across this arm of the lake. Drunken River follows next: this is a small, insignificant creek, deriving a notoriety from being the spot where, some years ago, a carousing party of voyageurs revelled until they were all drunk; hence the name. At Willow Island we passed the last harbour to be found on this end of the lake; ten miles from which is the mouth of Red River, at the southern extremity of the lake.

Lake Winipeg is estimated to be three hundred miles long and about thirty-five broad in the widest place. It lies nearly in the direction of north and south; the water is rather dark and muddy, and although generally shoal, and somewhat dangerous, yet sufficiently deep and navigable for good-sized schooners. The character of the shore is low, barren and rocky, without anything peculiar in its general appearance. During the winter it freezes, and is seldom clear of ice before the 10th of June. The principal feeders are the Great Saskatchewan and Winipeg; but four or five other rivers of considerable size enter it: namely, Poplar River and Beren's River on the east, Swan River and the Little Saskatchewan on the west, and Red River on the south. Squalls and cross currents of air are frequent, and it requires expert hands, as well as a skilful pilot, to navigate it in safety. Canoes are said to be preferable to boats, as almost any place affords them shelter; but I should decidedly give the preference to boats. When the wind is favourable, boats have been known to run from one end of the lake to the other in two days and two nights; but a week is considered a fair passage, although it took us eighteen days. It not unfrequently happens that boats have been detained in it twenty days, according to the state of the wind and weather.

At sun-rise on the 2nd of July, 1825, we made the entrance of the river, which has an insignificant appearance. Its breadth is about eighty yards, current moderate, and the water rather of a dark reddish hue, although it enters the lake over a bed of pure sand. A little distance from the lake, we found two or three families in their nomade condition, living in two wretched huts made of reeds and bits of bark; they were engaged in fishing, and we purchased two fine sturgeon for a cotton handkerchief each. These Indians, a mixture of the Saulteaux and Cree nation, had picked up a few words of broken French and English, by which they made themselves easily understood. They were clever at traffic, intelligent and obliging.

One of them, who passed for the chief's son, harangued us at some length. "My father," said he, "is above," pointing with his hand up the river: "I am sorry he is not here to speak to you. We are but few people, not more than sixty or seventy persons. We are dispersed for the purpose of living. Animals of the chase are very scarce, and the buffalo have deserted our lands.—The white people," said he again, pointing up the river, "are very numerous. They have frightened the wild animals and game from our lands, and have introduced animals and game of their own," alluding to the tame cattle and fowls. "While our buffalo remained, we never prevented the whites from killing them when they were hungry; but they threaten to kill us if we touch their buffalo: we now chiefly live on fish, and they are getting scarce. But although the whites will not let us kill their buffalo nor shoot their game, they are good to us: they give us guns to hunt, they give us thread to fish, tobacco to smoke, and show us how to make roots grow. Our country, once rich, can now no longer feed and clothe us. Look," said he, pointing to the women and children, "look at their garments. They are ragged. Our country is poor; we are no longer independent." The orator then sat down, and taking one of his children up in his arms, began to show us how tattered his clothes were.

We, however, saw nothing very striking in their condition. They seemed to be fat, and as well clothed and thriving as any Indians we had seen. But it is peculiar to some Indians, to plead poverty and to beg. As we proceeded, we came to another little band, where we had a parley with the chief, Pigwise; a short, stout, middle-aged man, with an expressive countenance. He introduced himself to us by showing his medal, and a paper signed by Lord Selkirk, stating him to be a steady friend of the whites. Seigneur Pigwise is not a native of the soil, nor considered an influential chief among his tribe, and owes his chieftainship to the whites alone. Such chiefs are never popular.

So far the surrounding prospect is anything but inviting, the country being low, flat, and marshy. Having advanced about ten miles up the river, we disembarked on the west bank, and breakfasted on the sturgeon we had purchased from the natives. Breakfast over, we washed, shaved, and brushed ourselves up a little; having, as I thought, entered the confines of a civilised country where we might soon expect to see white men.

We had not been long on shore, before a fellow of mongrel cast emerged from a thicket, driving before him some horses. I immediately accosted him with the view of arranging matters for proceeding on horseback to Fort Garry, the metropolis of the colony; but as the stranger could not speak French or English very intelligibly, we had some difficulty in settling the matter. At last, however, with the assistance of a little Indian jargon, we managed to understand each other, and a bargain was struck; he furnishing me with a good-looking beast, saddle and bridle, for the consideration of five shillings. I then asked him to show me the road, and on his pointing ahead in the direction of the river and assuring me I could not miss it, I ordered the men to proceed with the boat; then mounting my horse, I set off at full speed over a rough surface, covered with willow, poplar, and other obstructions, so that I could scarcely see twenty yards ahead.

My first object was to find the road; but I rode for several miles, and could not find it. As I was wandering to and fro, I met a fellow dressed in red leggings, with a bunch of feathers stuck in his cap, and in his hand a coil of shagamappe, like a Piegan horse-thief. It struck me he must be looking for horses, and I for the road, so we were well met. I asked him about the public road, how far I was from it, and in which direction I should find it. He stopped, stared at me for some time, but made no reply. I repeated the inquiry, asking him again, both in English and French, where was the public road, but with no better success: he remained mute, and we stood looking at each other for some time. Thinking he did not understand the term "public road," I asked him for the road to Fort Garry. "There," said he, pointing his hand before me in the direction of the river, as the other had done before. "Where?" said I, after looking all round and seeing none. "There," said he again, pointing in the same direction. "Where?" resumed I, "I see no road!" "Oh no! there is no road, but we go that way," pointing again in the same direction. Meaning all the time south.

But I was more indebted to the sun than to my guides for pointing out the direction, for had it been a cloudy or dark day, I might have wandered long enough without knowing in what direction I was going, as the word "south" was never once used: a motion of the hand, with the word "There," was all I had to guide me. Seeing I could make no better of it, I set off, and made my way through the bushes; taking care, however, to go as near south as possible. Having advanced about fifteen miles, I stumbled on a sort of road or foot-path, near to a place called the Image Plains, from there being some large stones at the place painted by the natives with images of men and beasts.

At Image Plains the country on the west is open, free from bushes, and, as far as the eye can reach, a boundless prairie. On the east, however, a narrow belt of tall trees running south, points out the direction of the river, and served me as a guide. And here, for the first time, a small herd of tame cattle grazing in the plains attracted my attention, as being the most satisfactory sign I had yet seen of civilisation in Red River. I gazed for some minutes on a scene so novel and interesting, after having been roaming so many years among animals wild as the countries they inhabited. Will these plains, thought I, so long the haunts of the wild buffalo, become the property of the white man? Is not only the red man, but his means of subsistence, to perish before the march of civilisation? While thus musing, I was overtaken by one of the settlers, a very intelligent man of middle age, and as he was riding the same way, we entered into conversation.

My companion and I proceeded, conversing about the present condition and prospects of the colony. He informed me that I was now on the only road that could be called public; though it appeared to me nothing more than a track marked out by the feet of animals, leading at random through the plains, and scarcely visible ten yards ahead of us.

As we journeyed, my fellow-traveller pointed out to me a small isolated dwelling among the trees skirting the river, and looking as if it had no business there. As we advanced, similar buildings, rudely and hastily constructed, became more and more frequent. On asking my comrade from what country the settlers had emigrated, he replied, "From the Highlands of Scotland." In answer to some other queries, he told me that the settlers were pretty comfortable in the land of their adoption; that they paid five shillings for an acre of land, and were exempt from either rent or taxes; that the circulating medium of the colony was printed promissory notes, the highest for twenty shillings, and the lowest for one shilling, sterling, issued by the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company, and answering well enough for every purpose of trade. The government, he said, was solely in the hands of the Company, and was as liberal and indulgent as could be expected; but the market was limited and money scarce, the price of labour high and labourers few.

"There are," said he, "three Roman Catholic priests in the settlement, who have a chapel for their hearers. There is likewise a missionary of the English church, but no congregation; and a Scotch congregation, but no minister! This clergyman, whom, in the absence of one of our own persuasion, we of necessity hear, is a very faithful man in his way; but his ways are not our ways, and because we cannot fall into his views, there is anything but cordiality between us: however, as we have, so far, no choice in the matter, we are content to give him our left hand of fellowship, reserving our right for our own church, whenever, in the course of events, we shall see her walls arise in our land."

My next question he answered by stating, "that there were no towns, nor villages, nor merchants in the colony." I then asked him if there were any magistrates or any gaol; and he replied in the negative. "Then," said I, "you must consider honesty a virtue." He answered me by saying, "There is hardly a lock and key, bolt or bar, on any dwelling-house, barn, or store amongst us, and our windows are parchment without any shutters." "That," said I, "speaks well for the honesty of the inhabitants." In answer to some other questions, he informed me that there were no mills in the colony, nor hardly any attempt at machinery of any sort. With regard to provisions, beef—the principal article of food, there being no sheep in the colony—was two shillings and fourpence per stone, flour twenty shillings per hundredweight, and butter ninepence per pound; while English goods were charged twenty-five per cent. on prime cost.

We had now reached a place called the Frog Plains, and I asked my companion [illegible] the place was so named. Pointing to a large swamp in the immediate vicinity, he said, "Because the frogs hold a concert there: formerly the French called it *La Grenouillère*, and from that the English gave it the name it now bears." And here, for the first time, we got a glimpse of the river, sluggishly flowing over its clayey channel, which the work of centuries had gradually scooped out from the level prairie. Here also we saw another small herd of domestic cattle, and some small patches of arable land lying along the banks of the river: for the plough had not yet got beyond the footpath on which we travelled. These patches reminded me of the state of agriculture among the half-civilised natives of the Sandwich Islands, where I have seen a field of moderate size divided into a hundred and twenty plots, belonging to as many proprietors, each cultivating a piece not half the size of that tilled by an Irish labourer for keeping a cow. But these practical indications of labour and industry, as elements of civilisation and moral good, were greatly marred by the continual passing and repassing of armed savages, chanting their war-songs, dangling scalps, and smiling with savage contempt on the slow drudgery of the white man. So that, however flattering were our hopes of Red River, as the source of civilisation and Christianity among the heathen, the results had hardly yet developed themselves.

But we must now glance at the geographical position of the country. Red River, lying in the direction of north and south, has its source at a place called Otter-Tail Lake, near the height of land which divides the waters that run into Hudson's Bay on the north, from those that flow to the Gulf of Mexico on the south. As far as the Grand Forks, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles, it retains its breadth and depth, and is navigable for barges; but beyond that, in many places the water is scarcely deep enough to float an Indian canoe.

If we except about ten miles at the mouth of the river, which is swampy, all the rest, as far as Pembina, in lat. 49° N. (where the boundary line which separates Great Britain from the United States passes), is good soil, rich and well adapted for crops in favourable seasons; yet, generally speaking, the isolated position of the colony, and its northern and frozen locality, almost preclude the inhabitants from intercourse with the rest of the civilised world; except once a year, when the Company's ship from England reaches York Factory. Consequently the remote colony of Red River may be said to be as far from England as any colony or people on the habitable globe. The winters are of seven months' duration, and the mercury freezes.

Neither on the south are its prospects flattering: there the American frontiers skirt the settlement; St. Peter's on the Mississippi being the nearest place of social intercourse with civilised man. Yet the outlet must in the nature of things be south, and not north; though an intercourse with the States cannot be reciprocal, therefore cannot be lasting. An intercourse might indeed prove beneficial to Red River; but Red River by that intercourse can never prove beneficial to the States, it having nothing to give the Americans but what they have got at home. So much, then, for its prospects in time of peace. In the event of a war, however, between England and America, what would be the lot of Red River? It must, without a doubt, be sacrificed. But, apart from the Americans, the Red River settler's greatest dread would arise from the aboriginal hordes that surround him; for although the savages of the north dare not go to the south, or within the American lines, yet the Indians of the south may with great facility travel to the north. All things considered, the only object Lord Selkirk could have had in view by colonising it, was to keep a door open for the fur trade of the far west; and for that purpose it must prove convenient.

Our horses having rested themselves a little, we resumed our travelling. As we journeyed on, my companion and I talked over the affairs of the colony; and from what I had seen, and from the information he gave me, I began seriously to reflect on the choice I had made, and the result was anything but pleasant.

At some distance from the Frog Plains is the Seven Oaks Creek; that fatal spot noticed in a former Chapter,* where the tragedy of the 19th of June, 1816, was enacted. In the immediate vicinity of this, my companion pointed out to me the locality which Lord Selkirk, in a conference with the Scotch emigrants in 1817, had fixed upon as the most convenient site for their church; naming the parish Kildonnan. From Parsonage Creek we advanced through swamps knee-deep in mud and clay. From this position Point Douglas came into view, a projecting tongue of land formed by one of the many bendings of the river, and so named after the noble founder of the colony. About a mile beyond this, is situated, near the confluence of the Assiniboine and the Red River, Fort Garry, the metropolis of the country, and further celebrated as the spot where, in 1811, the Earl of Selkirk concluded a treaty with the Indians for the privilege of settlement. This was the first groundwork of civilisation in this part of British North America. I was anxious to see a place I had heard so much about, but I must confess I felt disappointed. Instead of a place walled and fortified, as I had expected, I saw nothing but a few wooden houses huddled together without palisades, or any regard to taste or even comfort. To this cluster of huts were, however, appended two long bastions in the same style as the other buildings.

These buildings, according to the custom of the country, were used as dwellings and warehouses for carrying on the trade of the place. Nor was the Governor's residence anything more in its outward appearance than the cottage of a humble farmer, who might be able to spend fifty pounds a year. These, however, were evidences of the settled and tranquil state of the country.

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* Chap. III. vol. I. p. 90.

I wished before closing my narrative to have added a few things in reference to the statistics of the settlement; but on this point my companion could give me no information. "No census," he said, "had as yet been taken;" there was, therefore, no document, nor any statement that could be relied on.

Thus ended my first day in Red River; and having, after a somewhat varied and eventful life, settled down, my remarks and my wanderings naturally come to a close together.

THE END.

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